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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

VOLUME V SUMMER 1953 NUMBER 3

THE ORIGINAL ORPHAN OF CHINA

LIU WU-CHI

THE *Orphan of Chao (Chao-Shih Ku-Erh)* deserves attention because of the part it has played in the literature of both the East and the West. Though not considered by the Chinese as one of their dramatic masterpieces, the *Orphan of Chao* has the distinction of being the first Chinese play to be rendered into any European language and the only Chinese play that has left an imprint on Western drama. But there is as yet no systematic study of the original play, its author, its sources, and its various European translations and adaptations.[1]

The Yuan drama, of which the *Orphan of Chao* is a good specimen, flourished in the thirteenth century, when China was ruled by the Mongols. In 1234 Ogodai, son of Genghis Khan, conquered Northern China; in 1280 Kubla Khan unified the whole of China by overthrowing the Sung empire in the South. During this brief period, there was a surprisingly large number of dramatists. We know the names of at least 57 writers and the titles of 378 plays, of which more than one-fifth are preserved. Almost all these writers lived in or near Peking; one of them, Chi Chun-hsiang, was the author of the *Orphan of Chao.*

Little is known of Chi Chun-hsiang except that he was the author of six plays. His name appears in *Lu Kuei Pu*, or *A Book of Ghosts*, the only contemporary record of Yuan drama, compiled by Chung Szu-ch'eng.[2] In this Chinese *biographia dramatica*, Chi Chun-hsiang is mentioned as one of the "former authors already dead," along with

[1] Accounts of the English and French adaptations of the *Orphan of Chao* can be found in Ch'en Shou-yi, "The Chinese Orphan: a Yuan Play," *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, III (Shanghai, Sept. 1936), 89-115, and William W. Appleton, *A Cycle of Cathay* (New York, 1951), pp. 81-89.

[2] Chung Szu-ch'eng was himself a dramatist who wrote in the first half of the fourteenth century, his preface to *A Book of Ghosts* being dated 1330.

Kuan Han-ch'ing, Wang Shih-fu, and Pai P'u,[3] who were Yuan dramatists of the thirteenth century. Several other groups followed, the last consisting of writers who were Chung Szu-ch'eng's contemporaries and wrote before 1330. Since the lists in *A Book of Ghosts* are arranged chronologically, it is obvious that Chi Chun-hsiang, whose name is included in the first list of Yuan dramatists, must have lived in the thirteenth century.[4]

Besides the *Orphan of Chao*, Chi Chun-hsiang wrote *Han Hsiang-tzu Thrice Attempts to Convert Han Tan-tzu*,[5] *The Prince of Hsin-an Pronounces Judgment on the Tea-Merchant's Boat, Tsao Po-ming Makes a False Judgment on the Stolen Goods, The Story of an Ass Skin*, and *Chen Wen-tu Comprehends Tao in a Dream of the Pine Shadow*. All these plays are lost, but their titles indicate that they covered a wide range of subjects. *Han Tan-tzu* and the *Dream of the Pine Shadow* were Taoistic, while the *Tea-Merchant's Boat* and the *Stolen Goods*, both belonging to a type of popular drama known as law-suit plays, were realistic. *The Story of an Ass Skin* was probably humorous. Its title gives no clue to the content, but from a verse in memory of Chi Chun-hsiang, written by Chia Chung-ming, a fourteenth-century dramatist, we know that the play was "unrestrained in feeling,"[6] and it may well have been a bourgeois comedy, a major division of the Yuan drama.

With only six plays to his credit, Chi Chun-hsiang cannot be compared with such prodigious writers as Kuan Han-ch'ing, author of 68 plays, or with Kao Wen-hsiu and Cheng T'ing-yu, authors respectively of 34 and 23 plays. Nor did Chi Chun-hsiang receive from his contemporaries such praise as was given to other playwrights. Chu Ch'uan (fourteenth century), a prince of the Ming dynasty, described Chi Chun-hsiang's lyrics as "plum-flowers in snow,"[7] meaning that his songs are as pure and delicate as plum flowers and snowflakes. This and the memorial verse by Chia Chung-ming are the only contemporary references we have to Chi Chun-hsiang.

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[3] Pai P'u, the youngest of the three, was the only Yuan dramatist whose dates, 1226-1285, are definitely established.

[4] The *Orphan of Chao* has been assigned to the fourteenth century by Ch'en Shou-yi, *op. cit.*, p. 89, and Appleton, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[5] Han Tan-tzu is the literary name of Han Yu, 768-824, a famous Chinese writer of the T'ang dynasty, known as the "prince of literature." His nephew, Han Hsiang-tzu, who tried to convert him to Taoism in this play, was one of the Eight Immortals, a celebrated group of Taoist deities.

[6] Ma Lien, "New Annotations of *Lu Kuei Pu*," *Bulletin of the National Library of Peiping*, X, iii (May-June, 1936), 62.

[7] Chu Ch'uan, *T'ai-ho Chen-yin P'u* (A Treatise on Sounds of Universal Harmony), Han-fen Lou Rare Book Library, Series Nine, I, 11. The Han-fen Lou edition was a Commercial Press (Shanghai) reprint of an early Ming edition with a preface dated 1398.

The complete title of the *Orphan of Chao* is *Wrongs Avenged by the Orphan of Chao*. At the end of the play, there are two verses that summarize the story as follows:

> Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu is ashamed of being investigated;
> The orphan of Chao greatly revenges his family wrongs.

Revenge, therefore, is the theme of the play, a theme popular with dramatists of all ages and peoples.

The play is divided into six parts. It consists of five *chueh*, or acts,[8] and a *chih-tzu*, or "wedge," which may be inserted between the acts, but which usually serves, as in this case, as a prologue. But while the "wedge" is commonly used by the Yuan dramatists, the division of a play into five acts is rather exceptional, the usual number of acts being four. The *Orphan of Chao* is included in a well-known anthology of 100 Yuan plays,[9] and is the only work in the anthology which has five acts instead of four. However, since the discovery of some thirty previously unknown Yuan plays in 1937, we now know other five-act plays. Apparently the structure of the Yuan drama was not as rigid as has been believed, and an extra act could very well be added when necessary. Chi Chun-hsiang was not the only Yuan playwright who defied the four-act convention.

Like all Yuan drama, the *Orphan of Chao* consists of both dialogue and songs. The songs are chanted by the chief actor or protagonist, who may be either male or female. The Yuan tradition requires that the protagonist take up the singing part in all the acts, but it does not require that the protagonist be the same character throughout the play. In the *Orphan of Chao*, for instance, the protagonist has three roles: General Han Chueh in the first act, the retired minister, Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu, in the second and third acts, and the young orphan, Ch'eng P'e, in the last two acts. But no matter which character he impersonates, the protagonist is always assigned the singing role.[10]

The function of the song is manifold. Sometimes it helps to tell the story; at other times it adds to the dramatic action. But always it represents a spontaneous outburst of emotion that heightens the dramatic tempo and gives a lyric quality to the play. The Chinese drama, like the Greek, is essentially poetic, and a Chinese play trans-

[8] A *chueh* is a song sequence, containing usually from eight to twelve songs that have the same *kung-tiao*, or Chinese tonality.

[9] *Selections from the Yuan Drama*, edited by Tsang Mu-hsin, a Ming dynasty scholar, and printed in 1616.

[10] The only exception is in the "wedge," where the two songs in the *Orphan of Chao* are sung by a second male actor, who impersonates Chao Shuo, father of the orphan.

lated without its songs is just as incomplete as a Greek play without its choruses. The beauty of a Yuan drama lies in its poetry, without which it is not a drama.

The *Orphan of Chao* tells the tragic story of the house of Chao, a great ministerial family in the state of Tsin in Northern China. The action takes place in the early part of the sixth century B.C., at a time when the sovereigns of the Chou dynasty held only nominal sway over the country. Their power was rapidly declining, and a number of large feudal states were assuming semi-independence in both military and political affairs. Tsin, especially, was a mighty state ruled a duke, who had his own court and ministers and was the sole arbiter of the fate of his subjects. In the course of time, the duke of Tsin became too weak to govern his ministers, and some of them became so unruly that they assumed the power of the duke, just as the duke had assumed that of the king.

One of the usurping ministers was T'u An-ku, general of the army under Prince Ling of Tsin. In the prologue of Chi Chun-hsiang's play, T'u An-ku is shown to have conceived such a deadly hatred of his rival, Chao Tun, a great minister, that he is bent on eradicating the entire Chao family. After disposing of Chao Tun and having the 300 members of the Chao clan slaughtered, T'u An-ku next counterfeits a decree under the prince's name, ordering the death of Chao Shuo, Chao Tun's son. Chao Shuo is married to Prince Ling's daughter; as son-in-law of the prince, he had been spared during the massacre. When he receives the forged edict, he kills himself.

In the first act, it is made known that a posthumous son had been born to Chao Shuo by his wife, the princess. Anxious to get rid of the orphan, T'u An-ku orders Han Chueh, a general, to surround the princess' palace and forbids anyone, on pain of death, to take the orphan out. In the meantime, Ch'eng Ying, a physician and friend of the Chao family, has entered the palace at the princess' request. Having entrusted Ch'eng Ying with the orphan, the princess hangs herself. Faithful to his promise, Ch'eng Ying places the infant in a medicine box and ventures out of the palace. He is searched by Han Chueh, who soon discovers the orphan. But instead of arresting them, Han Chueh allows Ch'eng Ying and the child to depart in safety. Then, fearing punishment, he stabs himself.

Failing to find the Chao orphan, T'u An-ku threatens to put to death all infants under six months of age in the state of Tsin. Ch'eng Ying is afraid that his charge may be discovered and consults with Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu, a retired minister and friend of the Chao family. The two decide that Ch'eng Ying should take his own son, who was born at the same time as the Chao baby, to Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu and then inform T'u

An-ku of its hiding place, pretending that it is the orphan. This plan is made in the second act and carried out in the third, in which Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu sacrifices his life together with that of the Ch'eng baby. Meanwhile, T'u An-ku, taking Ch'eng Ying as his confidant, adopts Ch'eng Ying's child as his own, not knowing that it is the orphan of Chao.

Twenty years intervene between the third and fourth acts. When the fourth act begins, the Chao orphan, known as Ch'eng P'e, is a young man, strong in body and skillful in the use of weapons. Then Ch'eng Ying decides that the time has come for revenge. So he has a scroll drawn with pictures illustrating the various episodes in the tragedy of the Chao family and featuring the many loyal friends and retainers who have died for it. The scroll is shown to the orphan of Chao, who soon discovers his real parentage and cries out for vengeance.

In the fifth act, the orphan of Chao carries out his revenge. By this time, the new ruler of Tsin, Prince Tao, is anxious to get rid of T'u An-ku and orders the orphan to have T'u seized and killed. This command is obeyed immediately. In the end, the orphan, now called Chao Wu, is reinstated in his family title and property; Ch'eng Ying is given his deserved reward; and old Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu is posthumously honored.

From this summary we see that the *Orphan of Chao* is a historical play. Histories form a main division of Yuan drama; they have a great appeal to the Chinese. But how authentic is the story of the *Orphan of Chao*, and what, if any, are its sources? To find an answer we must go back to a famous Confucian classic, *Spring and Autumn*, in which is recorded the history of the various feudal states in the Chou kingdom for the years 722-481 B.C. On this chronicle there are three commentaries, of which the best known is *Tso's Commentary*; this is the ultimate source of the *Orphan of Chao*.

In *Tso's Commentary* there are several accounts of a great minister of Tsin, Chao Tun, who lived in the last years of the seventh century B.C. We learn that Chao Tun represented his state in a number of diplomatic meetings and fought for it in a number of wars. He was also responsible for setting up one of the Tsin rulers. The name of his son, Chao Shuo, occurs only once, as commander of one of the three armies of Tsin in an expedition in 597 B.C.[11] There is no mention of the date or manner of Chao Shuo's death, which presumably was peaceful. But *Tso's Commentary* also carries a story of the almost complete annihilation of the Chao family—a story which is rather

[11] James Legge, *The Chinese Classics* (London, 1872), Vol. V, Pt. 1, p. 312.

different from that of the Yuan drama. According to Tso's chronicle for 587 B.C., Chao Shuo's widow, who was the sister of the reigning duke, Ching,[12] had illicit relations with Chao Ying, her husband's uncle.[13] For this reason, Chao Ying was exiled by his elder brothers, Chao T'ung and Chao Kua; to avenge her lover, the widow falsely accused the Chao brothers of plotting against the state. As a result, in 583 B.C., [14] Duke Ching attacked the family of Chao, killed T'ung and Kua, and confiscated the estates of the Chao clan, including that of Chao Wu, Chao Shuo's son. But Han Chueh, a court minister, remonstrated with the duke and obtained the duke's permission to restore to Chao Wu his fief. Ten years later,[15] when Chao Wu had grown up, he too became a court minister and the house of Chao flourished again.

Besides *Tso's Commentary*, the story of the Chao family appears also in the *Historical Records* written by Ssu-ma Ch'ien, a famous Chinese historian of the second century B.C. In his chapter on the "Noble Family of Tsin," Ssu-ma Ch'ien reproduced almost verbatim Tso's story of Chao Shuo and his wife. But in another chapter, the "Noble Family of Chao," he told a different story. Since this is the chief source of the Yuan play, the entire passage is translated here:

> T'u An-ku had been in favor with Duke Ling. At the time of Duke Ching, Ku was a minister of crime . . .
>
> Without asking for the duke's permission, T'u An-ku and his generals attacked the family of Chao at the lower palace, killing Chao Shuo, Chao T'ung, Chao Kua, and Chao Ying-ch'i. He also annihilated the entire Chao clan.
>
> The wife of Chao Shuo, who was pregnant, was an elder sister of Duke Ching. So she went to hide in the duke's palace. Chao Shuo had a retainer by the name of Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu. He asked Ch'eng Ying, Chao Chuo's friend: "Why don't you die?"
>
> "The wife of Chao Shuo is pregnant," Ch'eng Ying replied. "If by good fortune she should be delivered of a baby, I shall serve him. If it is a girl, I shall still have plenty of time to die."
>
> Soon Chao Shuo's wife gave birth to a boy. Hearing this news, T'u An-ku searched the palace for the infant. The lady [Chao] placed the child inside her trousers and prayed: "If the clan of Chao is doomed, then cry. If not, do not make any noise." At the time of the search, the child made no noise. When [the danger was] over, Ch'eng Ying said to Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu: "This search has failed, but there is certain to be another. What's to be done?"
>
> "To rear the orphan or to die, which is more difficult?" asked Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu.

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[12] The reigns of the dukes of Tsin at this period are as follows: Duke Ling, 620-607 B.C.; Duke Ch'eng, 606-600 B.C.; Duke Ching, 599-581 B.C.; Duke Li, 580-573 B.C.; Duke Tao, 572-558 B.C. For an historical account of the state of Tsin, see Albert Tchepe, *Histoire du royaume de Tsin* (Variétés sinologiques, No. 30, Shanghai, 1910).

[13] Legge, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 365.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 407.

"It is easy to die, but difficult to rear the orphan," answered Ch'eng Ying.

"The former lord of Chao was kind to you," said Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu. "You should exert yourself to do the difficult task and leave me the easier one. I ask to die first."

Then the two conceived a plan. They took another baby, wrapped it in an embroidered coverlet, and took it and hid it in the mountains. Then Ch'eng Ying went to the generals and said falsely to them: "I, Ch'eng Ying, am worthless; I cannot install the orphan of Chao. I will tell the orphan's whereabouts to anyone who will give me a thousand [ounces of] gold."

The generals were delighted and promised him [the money]. They raised an army and, following Ch'eng Ying, went to attack Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu. Ch'u-chiu lied to the generals, saying, "What a mean fellow Ch'eng Ying is! Formerly, during the trouble at the lower palace, he would not die but plotted with me to hide the orphan of Chao. And now he has betrayed me. Though I am unable to install the orphan of Chao, how could I have the heart to betray him?"

Carrying the child in his arms, he cried aloud: "Oh, Heavens, what crime has the orphan of Chao [committed]? Pray let him live, and kill only me."

The generals refused and killed both Ch'u-chiu and the child. Thinking that the orphan of Chao was dead, they were all in high spirits.

In the meantime, the real orphan of Chao was very much alive. For fifteen years, Ch'eng Ying hid him in the mountains. Then one day Duke Ching fell sick. By divination, it was learned that it was the spirit of some great minister whose posterity was not satisfied that had caused the duke's illness.

Duke Ching asked Han Chueh. The latter, knowing that the orphan of Chao was still alive, made reply: "Among those who did meritorious deeds [for the state], but whose sacrifices were discontinued, Chao was the only family . . . For generations they accomplished great deeds and their line was never extinct. But now your lordship has exterminated their clan, and all the people feel sorry for it. That is why this is revealed in the oracle of the tortoise shell and the milfoil stalks. May your lordship do something about it!"

Duke Ching inquired whether the Chao clan still had any posterity, and was told the truth about the orphan. Then Duke Ching planned with Han Chueh to reinstate the orphan of Chao. He summoned the orphan secretly to the palace. When the generals came to inquire after the duke's health, the duke used the followers of Han Chueh to coerce the generals; at the same time he produced the orphan of Chao, who was named Wu. There being no other way out, the generals said: "Formerly, the trouble at the lower palace was caused by T'u An-ku, who had feigned your lordship's order to command your servants. Otherwise, who would dare stir up the trouble? Indeed, if it were not for your lordship's illness, your servants would have pleaded with you long ago to reinstate the orphan of Chao. Now, your lordship's command is also the wish of us, your servants."

According to the order of the duke, Chao Wu and Ch'eng Ying paid their respects to the generals, who now turned against T'u An-ku and annihilated his clan. To Chao Wu were restored all his family estates.[16]

The *Historical Records* further relate that, when Chao Wu reached the age of capping, Ch'eng Ying announced that he was now ready to pay the debt he owed Chao Shuo and Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu for having

[16] Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *Shih Chi* (Historical Records), Szu Pu Pei Yao edition, XL, 3-4.

failed to join them earlier. Then he killed himself amidst a general mourning.[17]

We have no way of telling where Ssu-ma Ch'ien got his story of the orphan's revenge; it certainly differs from the account in *Tso's Commentary*, as well as from his own in the chapter on the "Noble Family of Tsin." But the story is so interesting and dramatic that it must have appealed to later writers, many of whom incorporated it into their writings. Thus we find it retold in Liu Hsiang's *Shuo Yuan* (Collection of Anecdotes),[18] Wang Chung's *Lun Heng* (Disquisitions),[19] and Chu Hsi's *T'ung Chien Kang Mu* (An Outline of History).[20] These, especially Chu Hsi's work, further popularized the story of the Chao orphan until it became commonly known to the Chinese public.

There is little doubt that Chi Chun-hsiang was indebted to these historical writings, and particularly to Ssu-ma Ch'ien, for the story of his *Orphan of Chao*. But it is unlikely that he borrowed from any earlier play or tale of the Chao orphan, for none has been discovered. The story is not included in the great anthology of short stories entitled *Tai-p'ing Kuang-chi* (Comprehensive Records in Time of Peace), made in the early years of the Sung dynasty (tenth century); nor is it found among the vernacular tales left by Sung story tellers. Of the plays written in the Sung-Chin period (twelfth century)[21] almost one thousand titles have been preserved, but none seem to be concerned with the story of the orphan.

There exists, however, a play entitled *Chao-shih Ku-erh Pao-yuan Chi* (The Story of the Revenge of the Chao Orphan), which was catalogued in volumes 13965-13991 of the Yung-lo Ta Tien, the Grand Library of Yung-lo (an early Ming emperor, 1403-24), and published about that time by Shih Te T'ang, a printer in Nanking. A drama of the Southern school, the play differs greatly in form, structure, and style from that by Chi Chun-hsiang, which belongs to the Northern school of drama. Since, generally speaking, the Southern drama developed much later than the Northern, the Shih Te T'ang version was probably a later work and might have been inspired by Chi Chun-hsiang's play, which seems to have been quite popular in its time. The

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[18] Liu Hsiang, *Shuo Yuan*, Szu Pu Ts'ung K'an edition, VI, 26.

[19] Wang Chung, *Lun Heng*, Szu Pu Ts'ung K'an edition, II, 23.

[20] Chu Hsi's work was quoted as the primary source of the Yuan play in a curious letter written by L. R. Deshautesrayes, "Professeur Royal & Interprète du Roi," to Sorel Desflottes, publisher of a French edition of Father Prémare's translation: *Tchao-Chi-Cou-Eulh ou L'Orphelin de la Maison de Tchao, Tragédie chinoise* (Peking, 1755), pp. 92-96.

[21] The Chin dynasty was established by the Nurchen Tartars in Northern China in 1127-1234. It co-existed with the Sung dynasty in Southern China.

evidence, though inconclusive, makes it probable that Chi Chun-hsiang was the first playwright to dramatize the story of the orphan of Chao, which he adapted chiefly from Ssu-ma Ch'ien's *Historical Records*.[22]

Five centuries passed before the *Orphan of Chao* was rendered into any European language. The East and West were quite isolated from each other, and no cultural link was forged between them before the arrival of the Jesuit fathers in China in the late Ming dynasty. What deserves attention is the question why, from all the Chinese plays, the *Orphan of Chao* should be singled out by Father Prémare (1666-1736), a French Jesuit missionary, for introduction to the Western world. One explanation, of course, is that the sentiments of loyalty and self-sacrifice which the play exemplifies must have appealed very much to the Jesuit scholar as a noble specimen of Chinese virtue worthy of being recommended to his own people.[23]

Joseph Henri Prémare was probably the most learned Sinologist of his time. He went to China as a preacher of the gospel and was fascinated by the language and literature of his adopted country. As a result of his diligent application, he became well versed in Chinese grammar and philology. The Chinese grammar he compiled and entitled *Notitia Linguae Sinicae* was one of the earliest in a European language. In collaboration with another Sinologist, Father Hervieu, he also compiled a Latin-Chinese dictionary. Besides these linguistic works, he translated into French, in 1731, the *Orphan of Chao*, which he called *L'Orphelin de la Maison de Tchao*. The play was published in 1735 in the third volume of Jean Baptiste Du Halde's *Description de la Chine*.[24] Du Halde himself had never been in China, but had become interested in China as an editor of the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, a famous Jesuit publication, of which volumes sixteen to twenty-six relate to things Chinese. From the wealth of Chinese materials at his disposal, including the manuscripts of twenty-seven Jesuit missionaries, Du Halde compiled his *Description de la Chine*.

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[22] One of the important changes in Chi Chun-hsaing's play is his making Ch'eng Ying sacrifice his own son, instead of just "another baby," for the orphan of Chao. This greatly enhances the dramatic effect of the play. Chi Chun-hsiang also employed the dramatist's prerogative of changing the years and reigns of the Tsin dukes. In his play, the orphan grows up to the age of twenty, instead of fifteen in the original, so that he can carry out the revenge himself. Han Chueh's role has been greatly altered, and the story of divination is dropped to make place for that of the scroll. The adoption of the orphan by T'u An-ku, which is not in the *Historical Records*, is certainly a happy innovation of the dramatist.

[23] Cf. John Brown, *A Dissertation on the Rise, Union, and Power, The Progressions, Separations, and Corruptions, of Poetry and Music* (London, 1763), p. 169.

[24] The complete title of Du Halde's book is *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de l'Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise.*

There was a curious circumstance in regard to the inclusion of Prémare's *L'Orphelin* in Du Halde's *Description*. It appears that Prémare, who was in Peking, had entrusted his play to two friends who were sailing for France, with the instruction that the manuscript, together with a letter, be delivered to Étienne Fourmont, a member of the French Academy. But instead of delivering the play to Fourmont, the emissaries gave it to Du Halde, who had it published in his *Description* without permission from either Prémare or Fourmont. An unpleasant exchange of letters between Fourmont and Du Halde resulted, Fourmont protesting Du Halde's unauthorized publication of the Chinese play. Fourmont's complaint was probably justified; but posterity owes a debt of gratitude to Du Halde for having made public the first European translation of a genuine Chinese play, which otherwise might have suffered the same fate that befell Prémare's *Notitia Linguae Sinicae*.[25]

There were two English editions of Du Halde's *Description de la Chine*:[26] the first, a four-volume edition, entitled *The General History of China*, translated in 1736 by Richard Brookes for the printer, John Watts; the second, a two-volume folio edition, published five years later by Edward Caves, proprietor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Thus two English versions of Prémare's translation of the Chinese play had already been published when in 1762 a third one appeared in Thomas Percy's *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*. This version seems to have been made by Percy himself. In the advertisement of the book, he wrote:

> This tragedy has been given twice already in our language, in two different translations of that book [Du Halde's *Description*]. Without derogating from the merit of these, we beg to mention that we have endeavoured to retain the peculiarities of the Chinese original, with a care and exactness, which the former translations did not always think it necessary to observe.[27]

It is true that Percy corrected some of the mistranslations from the French in the two earlier English versions. To mention one example —Brookes had translated the French phrase "un chien haut de quatre

[25] Earlier in 1728, Prémare had sent Fourmont the manuscript of his *Notitia*. Fourmont was then writing a grammar of his own. He made use of the materials in Prémare's book and hastened the publication of his own work, *Linguae Sinarum Grammatica Duplex* (1742), leaving the *Notitia* to gather dust in the Royal Library. The *Notitia* was not discovered until a century later, when it was published in Malacca in 1831.

[26] For a study of Du Halde's book, its reception in England, and the comparative merits of the two rival English editions by Watts and Cave, see Fan Tsen-chung, *Dr. Johnson and Chinese Culture* (London, 1945), pp. 6-9.

[27] Thomas Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* (London, 1762), I, 103.

pieds"[28] as "a Dog with four Feet"[29]—as if there were Chinese dogs with more than four feet!—which Percy now changed into "a dog four feet high!"[30] But, of course, Percy used only the French version of Father Prémare without going back to the Chinese original, and preserved all of Prémare's mistranslations,[31] which are very numerous. Nor did Thomas Percy restore the songs of the original play, which Prémare had omitted from his French translation. This is an unhappy omission; for the songs, as we know, form an integral part of a Chinese play and are its most outstanding "peculiarity." Du Halde remarked in his "Advertisement" to the Chinese tragedy: "There are Plays the songs of which are difficult to be understood, because they are full of Allusions to things unknown to us, and Figures of Speech very difficult for us to observe."[32] This explanation probably accounts for Prémare's omission; but it is unfortunate that the first Chinese play to be introduced to European readers should be an incomplete version, in which the best part of a Chinese drama is missing.

In spite of its shortcomings, Prémare's version of the *Orphan of Chao* was well received throughout Europe. The vogue of *chinoiserie* was then at its height, and Prémare's translation from the Chinese provided a new stimulus to European writers. In less than twenty years, from 1741 to 1759, there appeared adaptations of the Chinese play in the English, French, and Italian languages.

In England, as early as the second half of the seventeenth century, Elkanah Settle had romanticized China in his dramas, *The Conquest of China* (1676) and *The Fairy Queen* (1692). After that, there was a continuous stream of interest in Chinese stories, songs, dances, and pantomimes. So the appearance of a genuine play was certain to attract the attention of English writers, and an adaptation was soon made from it in 1741. This was *The Chinese Orphan: an Historical Tragedy* by William Hatchett, "a performer on the stage."[33] Hatchett seems to have been an adapter of plays all his life. Previously, he had written *The Rival Father or, The Death of Achilles* (1730), based upon Corneille and Racine, and *The Opera of Operas or, Tom Thumb the Great* (1733), taken from Fielding's play of the same name. For his third attempt at adaptation, Hatchett borrowed from the Chinese. His *Chinese Orphan* was never acted on the stage, but it was printed in

[28] Prémare, *Tchao-Chi-Cou-Eulh ou L'Orphelin de la Maison Tchao*, p. 70.
[29] Du Halde, *The General History of China* (London, 1736), III, 229.
[30] Thomas Percy, *op. cit.*, p. 192.
[31] For a list of Prémare's mistranslations see Stanislas Julien, *Tchao-Chi-Kou-Eul, ou L'Orphelin de la Chine* (Paris, 1834).
[32] Du Halde, *op. cit.*, III, 196.
[33] David Erskine Baker, *Biographia Dramatica* (London, 1812), Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 313.

London with a dedication to the Duke of Argyle, a political enemy of Sir Robert Walpole. Hatchett's play was obviously intended as a political weapon and, as such, its satire overshadows the original work's theme of revenge.

In his *Chinese Orphan*, Hatchett introduced a series of long political harangues that are irrelevant to the story and hinder the development of the dramatic action. The hero is no longer Ch'eng Ying, or Kifang in Hatchett's play, who was instrumental in the orphan's revenge, but T'u An-ku, renamed Siako, an archvillain of a politician. Whereas his prototype, T'u An-ku, was a simple villain bent upon the destruction of his rival's family, Siako had a more complicated and well-developed personality, in which were embodied all the traits of such an unscrupulous politician as Sir Robert Walpole might have seemed to be to his foes. But even a wicked politician had troubled moments:

> The Statesman has a thorny office on't!
> He must not have much commerce with his pillow,
> And having it, he finds but little rest,
> Who has to do to silence factious tongues;
> Subdue home enemies, or foreign foes;
> Baffle cabals—keep watch on broad sedition—
> Detect dark treasons, or rebellions quell—
> Of friend and foe alike he is afraid:
> The one opposes him, the other may,
> On every slight, or disappointed boon.
> Next, he must stand the publick butt of malice;
> Be canvass'd in each action, league and project;
> Be worry'd, bated, like a bull at stake;
> Be watch'd, suspected, like a very sharper:
> Then he must guard against his prince's frown,
> Which often is perplexity itself.[34]

One of the most important changes made by Hatchett is the shortening of the time duration in the play. In Chi Chun-hsiang's story, twenty years elapsed between the third and fourth acts. During this time, the orphan grows up to be a brave and strong youth ready to carry out his revenge. In Hatchett's play, however, the orphan (Camhy) remains a minor and performs no active part. The revenge motif is therefore considerably lessened; though Siako meets his deserved death, it comes as a result of his political failure rather than of a family feud. Hatchett retains the use of pictures to reveal the tragedy of the persecuted family, but these are not painted on a scroll for the curious eyes of the orphan, as in the original play; instead they are embroidered on an imperial robe to be presented to the emperor, who learns from them how wicked his trusted minister has been. Hatchett's version is less effective than the original, in which the intensity of the orphan's

[34] William Hatchett, *The Chinese Orphan* (London, 1741), pp. 36-37.

feeling increases when he learns the secret of his birth and the tragic story of his family. In Hatchett's play the scene becomes tediously long, as the king finds out for the first time from story after story what an egregious ass he has been to let the crafty Siako cajole and hoodwink him all these years!

Hatchett also altered the characters of the Chinese play. Besides giving them entirely different names, such as Kifang for Ch'eng Ying, Siako for T'u An-ku, and, rather ridiculously, Laotse (the name of the Taoist philosopher) for Kung-sun Ch'u-chiu, he introduced new characters such as Bonze, the Chief Priest; Ousanguee,[35] Kifang's friend and painter of the pictorial robe; and Lyping, wife of Kifang. Lyping was introduced to provide an emotional scene[36] in which she cries to have her baby back when she learns that it has been sent away by Kifang and replaced by the orphan. But her hysteria contributes little to the plot; nor does she appear again in the play.

As for the songs that are interspersed in the play "after the Chinese manner," they are of little value or interest. They add neither to the embellishment nor to the development of the drama; and they are as much unlike the Chinese songs as is the blank verse in which *The Chinese Orphan* is written. As a matter of fact, Hatchett's only authentic notation is the "bamboo discipline" given Laotse, the retired old courtier According to the stage direction, this is administered

> after the Chinese manner, which is thus: He is laid on his face on the ground, or a large table, then held by the arms and legs by four persons, while another strikes him with a bamboo, or cane, on the posteriors.[37]

This, however, is certainly not a happy innovation in the play. All in all, in the hands of Hatchett the *Orphan of Chao* assumes quite a new form, and the alterations are no improvement.

Du Halde's book must have circulated widely in Europe. In Vienna, it attracted the attention of Pietro Metastasio, who had been asked by Empress Maria Theresa to write a new drama for court performance. Having composed a number of plays based upon classical themes, he now looked to the Orient for inspiration. There was an additional reason for his change of subject. As he himself wrote to his friend:

> Greek and Roman subjects are excluded from my jurisdiction, because these nymphs are not to exhibit their chaste limbs; so that I must have recourse to

[35] For an identification of some of Hatchett's strange Chinese names, see Appleton, *op. cit.*, p. 83. Ousanguee, for instance, is derived from Wu San-kuei, a Chinese general of the seventeenth century, whose surrender to the Manchus made possible the latter's conquest of China and the establishment of the Ch'ing dynasty.

[36] Hatchett, *op. cit.*, Act III, Scene 1, pp. 29-31.

[37] Hatchett, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

Oriental history, in order not to shew the nakedness of the land, that the robes and ornaments of these nations may entirely envelope the actresses who are to represent the characters of men.[38]

The empress made other specifications also. There could be only five performers in the play, there must be a limit to the length of time of presentation and to the changes of scene, and there must be no "odious part."[39] Hampered though he was by these requirements, Metastasio happily hit upon the Chinese story of the orphan and produced in 1752 *L'Eroe cinese*, a three-act dramatic poem.[40]

At the end of his "Argomento," Metastasio specifically mentions Du Halde as his source: "Il padre *du Halde* ne' Fasti della monarchia Cinese, ed altri."[41] The scene of the play is an imperial palace on the river "Vejo" in the city of "Singana," capital of the province of Chensi. The five characters are Leango, regent of the Chinese empire; Siveno, the supposed son of Leango; Minteo, a mandarin of the army; and two Tartar princesses, beloved by Siveno and Minteo. Being a court performance with only five actresses, the play has a very simple plot. It revolves around the surprising discovery that Siveno is actually the royal orphan, the only remaining heir of the imperial family, which had been annihilated during the rebellion. At the same time, it is found that Leango's own son, who had been sacrificed to the rebels in Siveno's place and who had long been considered dead, is still alive. He is none other than Siveno's friend, Minteo. The play ends happily with the restoration of Siveno to the throne and the chorus singing the praise of Leango, the Chinese hero:

Sarà nota al mondo intero;
Sarà chiara in ogni età
Dell'eroe di questo impero
L'inudita fedeltà.[42]

Metastasio's adaptation contains very little of the original. In this he set an example for later adapters, including Voltaire, who wrote *L'Orphelin de la Chine* in 1753. Voltaire had long been an admirer of Chinese culture, especially of Chinese ethics and government as expounded by Confucius. It was therefore natural that he should be attracted by Du Halde's book. In his dedication to the Duke of Richelieu, Voltaire was lavish in his praise of China as one of the few ancient

[38] Charles Burney, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Abate Metastasio* (London, 1796), II, 16.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] For a detailed study of Metastasio, see Vernon Lee, *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (London, 1887), chapter IV, pp. 141-229; but *L'Eroe cinese*, a comparatively unimportant play, is not mentioned.

[41] *Opere di Pietro Metastasio* (Florence, 1820), VI, 217.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 281.

nations "qui aient connu le véritable esprit de la société."[43] He somewhat exaggerated the antiquity of Chinese drama by representing China as having cultivated "depuis plus de trois mille ans cet art, inventé un peu plus tard par les Grecs, de faire des portraits vivants des actions des hommes, et d'établir de ces écoles de morale où l'on enseigne la vertu en action et en dialogues."[44] He praised the *Orphan of Chao* as "un monument précieux qui sert plus à faire connaître l'esprit de la Chine que toutes les relations qu'on a faites et qu'on fera jamais de ce vaste empire." But to Voltaire's classical taste, the Chinese tragedy was still barbarous because it failed to observe the unities of time and action, "comme dans les farces monstrueuses de Shakespeare et de Lope de Vega, qu'on a nommées tragédies; c'est un entassement d'événements incroyables."[45]

Voltaire also makes clear the thesis of his play. What he is interested in is not so much the story and characterization of the Chinese play as the manners of the Tartars and the Chinese, and, in particular, the belief that reason and genius have a natural superiority over blind force and barbarism. In other words, instead of a tragedy of revenge, Voltaire envisages a moral piece in which virtue and civilization are to triumph.[47] For this purpose, he introduces Gengis Kan, the brave Tartar conqueror of China, and has him overcome in the end by the wisdom of Zamti, the learned mandarin, and by the virtue of Idamé, his wife. Thus Gengis Kan says to Zamti:

> Je fus un conquérant, vous m'avez fait roi.
> Soyez ici des lois l'interprète suprême;
> Rendez leur ministère aussi saint que vous-même;
> Enseignez la raison, la justice, et les mœurs.
> Que les peuples vaincus gouvernent les vainqueurs,
> Que la sagesse règne, et préside au courage;
> Triomphez de la force, elle vous doit hommage;
> J'en donnerai l'exemple, et votre souverain
> Se soumet à vos lois les armes à la main.[47]

In view of this thesis, Voltaire makes a complete alteration of the Chinese play, retaining only the story of the orphan. His orphan, like Metastasio's, is a royal heir entrusted to Zamti (Leango in Metastasio's play) by the Chinese monarch, who later meets death at the hands of the conquering Tartars; like Leango, Zamti is ready to sacrifice his own son to save the royal infant. But here the parallel ends. In Vol-

[43] *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, ed. Moland (Paris, 1877), V, 297.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 296.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 297.
[46] Voltaire described his play as "la morale de Confucius en cinq actes." See Pierre Martino, *L'Orient dans la littérature française au XVII^e^ et au XVIII^e^ siècle* (Paris, 1906), p. 223.
[47] Voltaire, *op. cit.*, V, 356.

taire's play, the orphan never grows up to revenge his family's wrongs; nor are the wrongs ever avenged. On the contrary, Voltaire strikes a strange but happy note when he makes Gengis Kan spare the orphan's life and promise to adopt him as his own son.

Voltaire also introduces the theme of love, which is entirely absent in the original. The Chinese play is a relentless, fast-moving story of intrigue, murder, and revenge, unrelieved by any tender emotion. But in the French play, Gengis Kan has become a devoted lover who once conceived a secret passion for Idamé when he first came to China as a fugitive, and who is consumed by the same passion when he returns as a conqueror. Again he woos and again he is refused by Idamé, because not even majesty and might can overcome such holy laws of the Chinese nation as paternal right, conjugal faith, honor, and justice. Bravely and defiantly Idamé exclaims:

> Je sais qu'ici tout tremble ou périt sous vos coups:
> Les lois vivent encore, et l'emportent sur vous.[48]

And in the end, as we have seen, the conqueror in his turn is conquered:

> Malgré moi je l'admire en lui donnant des fers:
> Je vois que ses travaux ont instruit l'univers;
> Je vois un peuple antique, industrieux, immense.
> Ses rois sur la sagesse ont fondé leur puissance,
> De leurs voisins soumis heureux législateurs,
> Gouvernant sans conquête, et régnant par les mœurs . . .
> Mon cœur est en secret jaloux de leurs vertus;
> Et, vainqueur, je voudrais égaler les vaincus.[49]

L'Orphelin de la Chine was first acted in August 1775 at the Théâtre Français in Paris. It proved to be a new triumph for Voltaire. The theater was crowded and the play ran until the removal of the court to Fontainebleau, where the actors followed to perform in the palace. Even Rousseau viewed with approval the staging of a play which exalted the virtues of an ancient civilization.[50] To us, Voltaire's work is as non-Oriental as possible, but to the French it must have appeared authentically Chinese, coming as it did from the pen of the learned encyclopedist. Here was not only a powerful drama by a great master, but one full of exotic and romantic coloring. The characters, too, were impressive: the mighty Gengis Kan, conqueror of men, alternately raging, threatening, falling in love, and torn by his passions; the pious Zamti, ever faithful to his cause and his country, and unperturbed by the raging storm outside; the virtuous Idamé, intensely feminine in her laments for the sacrifice of her son, and yet adamant in her adherence

[48] *Ibid.*, V, 341.
[49] *Ibid.*, V, 336.
[50] See James Parton, *Life of Voltaire* (Boston, 1881), II, 205-206.

to duty and the marriage vow. In those days Europe was still thrilled by the wonderful tales of ancient Cathay, and Voltaire's play came opportunely to add to the enthusiasm for the Orient.[51]

The success of *L'Orphelin de la Chine* was not confined to France alone; the play was acclaimed widely in the other parts of Europe. In England, by the middle of the eighteenth century, Voltaire was fast becoming "an instrumental force" in the drama.[52] In 1755, the same year Voltaire's play was performed in Paris, a French edition and an English translation appeared simultaneously in London and were warmly received by the critics.[53] In the English version, the anonymous translator observed that "a play built on the same fable could not fail of being well received on our stage,"[54] and suggested that Zamti could best be acted by Garrick and Idamé by Mrs. Cibber or Mrs. Pritchard. At the same time, it became known that a writer, probably John Hawkesworth, was employed by Garrick to adapt Voltaire's play for the English stage.[55] The most important contribution, however, was made by Arthur Murphy, who wrote his *Orphan of China* in 1756.

Murphy had already made his name as a writer of farces when he chose a Chinese theme for his first tragedy. He claimed that he had been attracted by Prémare's play, but, as a matter of fact, his play closely resembles Voltaire's *L'Orphelin*, which was clearly its model. The interest in the Orient, newly aroused by Du Halde and Voltaire in France, had spread to England, where the performance of Murphy's play was a further stimulus.

Three years elapsed between the writing of Murpy's *Orphan of China* and its appearance at the Theater Royal in Drury Lane. The delay was occasioned by a long altercation between Murphy and Garrick, who was then manager of the Drury Lane theater. The "paper war" between the two is too complicated to be told here.[56] Suffice it to say that the trouble was caused by the reluctance of Garrick to accept Murphy's play for Drury Lane and by his putting off the performance as long as possible. It appears that Garrick had long taken

[51] Henri Cordier attributes the success of Voltaire's play, which he calls mediocre, to its fine acting by Lekain and Mlle Clairon; but he also points out that the play was significant because it was probably the first French play of which the subject was taken directly from the Far East. See Cordier, *La Chine en France au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1910), p. 115.

[52] Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 71.

[53] Harold Lawton Bruce, *Voltaire on the English Stage* (Berkeley, 1918), p. 70.

[54] Voltaire, *The Orphan of China, A Tragedy. Translated from the French of M. De Voltaire* (London, 1756), p. v.

[55] Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 71 and 72, note 24.

[56] See Howard H. Dunbar, *The Dramatic Career of Arthur Murphy* (New York, 1946), pp. 52-64.

an interest in China as a theatrical possibility,[57] and had been contemplating an adaptation from Voltaire when Murphy stole the thunder from him. Hence his unwillingness to produce Murphy's *Orphan of China*. But finally, with the support of Henry Fox, Horace Walpole, and William Whitehead, Murphy succeeded in forcing Garrick to stage the play; at its first performance in April 1759 it won immediate success.

In his prologue to Murphy's play, Whitehead wrote:

> Enough of Greece and Rome. Th'exhausted store
> Of either nation now can charm no more:
> Ev'n adventitious helps in vain we try,
> Our triumphs languish in the public eye;
> And grave processions, musically slow,
> Here pass unheeded,—as a Lord Mayor's shew.
> On eagle wings the poet of to-night
> Soars for fresh virtues to the source of light,
> To China's eastern realms: and boldly bears
> Confucius' morals to Britannia's ears.[58]

These lines, coming as they did from the pen of the poet laureate, throw a very interesting light on English literature of the period. China bade fair to compete with Greece and Rome, and, in the words of Whitehead, to supplant them as a "source of light" for the dramatists.

But actually, in Murphy's *Orphan*, there was little of the morals of Confucius. Unlike Voltaire, Murphy was not so much interested in proving the superiority of culture over barbarity as in presenting an effective, well-made play that would attract a large audience. This he made clear in his letter "To M. De Voltaire" appended to the 1759 edition of his play. Murphy's criticism of Voltaire is twofold. He objects to Voltaire's introduction of a love theme into the Chinese play, writing rather sarcastically: "The *role pour l'amoureux* must have its place, and the rough conqueror of a whole people must instantly become *Le Chevalier* Gengiskan, as errant a lover as ever sighed in the Thuilleries at Paris."[59] And he criticizes Voltaire for his lack of action: "A scantiness of interesting business seemed to me a primary defect in the construction of the French Orphan of China."[60]

As we have noted, Murphy based his *Orphan of China* upon Voltaire's; but he made a number of important changes.[61] In the main,

[57] One of Garrick's theatrical adventures was the staging of a French ballet, *The Chinese Festival*, with French dancers and actors. For a detailed discussion, see Appleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-81.

[58] Arthur Murphy, *The Orphan of China* (London, 1759), p. vi.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

[61] For a comparative study of the plays of Voltaire and Murphy, see Sandmann, "Voltaire's 'L'Orphelin de la Chine' und Murphy's 'The Orphan of

what he did was to drop the love story of the Tartar conqueror and give the orphan, Zaphimri, an active part in the drama. This hint he took from the Chinese play. In place of Voltaire's happy ending, Murphy reasserted the theme of revenge by making Zaphimri, a vigorous young man of twenty, the avenger of his family's and nation's wrongs. The play, indeed, remains a tragedy with the death of Zamti and his wife, Mandane. Though the story and the characters have been greatly altered, Murphy's *Orphan* retains as a whole the spirit of the Chinese tragedy and is closer to it than any other European adaptation.

The *Orphan of China* was well received in the literary circles of London. It was reviewed favorably in the magazines and won the praise of critics such as Goldsmith, who wrote in an article in the *Critical Review* for May 1759: "The first night the whole house seemed pleased, highly and justly pleased . . . the nervous sentiment, the glowing imagery, the well-conducted scenery, seemed the sources of their pleasure." [62] What Goldsmith might have added is that the play also owed its success to the superb acting by Garrick as Zamti and Mrs. Yates as Mandane, in which role she "confirmed her reputation as one of the most excellent actresses who have trod the English stage."[63] As for Murphy, he was rewarded handsomely with the proceeds from the first performance of the play, as well as from its later revivals in both Drury Lane and Covent Garden. The interest was such that the play was the occasion of a keen competition between two theaters in Dublin, the Smock Alley and the Crow Street, each vying with the other to be the first to produce it; it appeared almost simultaneously in both in January 1761.[64] A few years later, the *Orphan* came to America, when it was first produced in 1767 at the Southwark Theater in Philadelphia; in 1768 it was produced at the John Street Theater in New York,[65] where it was revived as late as 1842.[66] All these records show that Murphy's play, though less famous than Voltaire's, was an important event of the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

Murphy's *Orphan of China* was the last European play made from Prémare's translation. Goethe may have used the Chinese story for his *Elpenor*, which is also a tragedy of an orphan, but its resemblance

China,' "*Neuphilologisches Centralblatt* (Hanover, 1895), No. 9, pp. 257-261; No. 10, pp. 289-294; No. 11, pp. 321-329. For other discussions, see Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-79; Dunbar, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67; and John Pike Emery, *Arthur Murphy, an Eminent English Dramatist of the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 49-50.

[62] *Cricial Review*, VII, 435.

[63] David E. Baker, *op. cit.*, III, 106.

[64] Dunbar, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

[65] Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 74, 142.

[66] Dunbar, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

to the Chinese play is too slight to justify considering it an adaptation.[67] With the turn of the century, the tide of interest in Cathay ebbed, and the *Orphan of Chao* lost its appeal to Western readers. But even then the Chinese play was not entirely neglected. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century a complete French translation was made of Chi Chun-hsiang's work—by Stanislas Julien in 1834.[68] Julien was a professor of Chinese language at the Collège de France and an outstanding translator of Chinese novels and plays.[69] Though less acclaimed, his work is superior to that of his predecessor. It is not only an accurate translation, but is also a complete translation of both the dialogue and the songs of the Chinese original. Thus, at long last, the *Orphan of Chao* was made available to European readers in the form in which Chi Chun-hsiang wrote it.

In conclusion it must be said that the *Orphan of Chao*, though badly mutilated in its earliest European form, is nevertheless one of the very few works of Chinese literature that have influenced European writers. It is not surprising that the imitations should have been radically different from the original, and that, from a historical play of family revenge, the *Orphan of Chao* became a political satire in the hands of Hatchett, an operatic poem in the hands of Metastasio, a moral comedy in the hands of Voltaire, and a melodrama—with all its sentiment and sensation—in the hands of Murphy.

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[67] Appleton, however, was of a different opinion. He wrote: "Still other adaptations of the story included . . . Goethe's fragment *Elpinor* [*sic.*]" (*op. cit.*, p. 87). See also Adolf Reichwein, *China and Europe, Intellectual and Artistic Contacts in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1925), pp. 133-135. But, in spite of the assertions of Appleton and Reichwein, Goethe's indebtedness to the Chinese source seems to be very slight and indefinite. The only fact we know is that Goethe read Du Halde in January 1781 and was delighted by Prémare's translation. In August he began to write *Elpenor*, and took it with him on his Italian journey; but he never finished the play and left it a fragment.

[68] The complete title of Julien's translation is *Tchao-Chi-Kou-Eul, ou L'Orphelin de la Chine, Drame en prose et en vers.*

[69] Julien translated another Yuan drama, *Hoei-Lan-Ki, ou L'Histoire du cercle de craie* (London, 1832).

EURYDICE RECOVERED?

JANE DAVIDSON REID

TWO POETS of this century, Rainer Maria Rilke and Edith Sitwell, have turned to the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." and "Eurydice" come at some remove in time and from different stages of the two poets' development; but both carry authority which speaks of the creative life from which they issue. Neither poem is a piece of neoclassicism; both are visions of the myth from a quite modern sensibility. And yet one of the poems seems closer in tone to the ancient mode than the other.

Just as neither poet intends to reproduce antiquity, so too their forms are free. Poetic structure in both poems (Rilke's in ninety-five lines, Miss Sitwell's in eighty-two) is unconstrained. This is to be expected both from Rilke, who works from the German tradition of the ode, and from Miss Sitwell, who has said "each poem [grows] according to the laws of its own nature, but in a line which is more often the irregular, though entirely natural, shape of a tree or a flowering plant."[1] Rilke also had deeply entrenched intuitions of the natural inspiration of poetry.[2]

Miss Sitwell and Rilke also agree in a third respect. Not only is their essential vision of the old myth modern, their forms free and "irregularly natural," but their use of symbols is often strikingly similar. They both appear to *believe* in their particular symbols. If one reads Rilke's poetry from the *Buch der Bilder* through the *Duino Elegies* and Miss Sitwell from "Gold Coast Customs" to the present, one is struck by the recurrence of symbols. Each poet makes a cosmology of symbols: Miss Sitwell, sun, lion, harvest, Ixion, baboon; Rilke, angel, acrobat, hero, creature. And these symbols are re-used wherever they come to the poet's mind (the reader is supposed to share the poet's instant re-creation of them). Whether or not this pattern of recurrence is sometimes merely repetitive in effect is a question we shall have to consider later.

The similarities in poetic method are striking. But the poems are actually, even so, widely separate in effect. Why is this so? The question is premature, of course, but it may be answered tentatively. The difference in sensibilities probably derives partly from the different

[1] Quoted in Elizabeth Drew and John L. Sweeney, *Directions in Modern Poetry* (New York, 1940), p. 233.

[2] See notes to Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, ed. J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender (New York, 1939).

historical place of each poem in the creative history of the poet, partly from the difference between English and German, and partly from the very great gulf between the styles of two writers.

In 1906 Rilke wrote Clara Westhoff Rilke from Naples that he "was finally in the museum today. Have seen many things again, not only the one little Pompeian tablet with the slender figure against the sea. Little fragments, single bronzes, Orpheus, Eurydike, Hermes: a great deal that is confirming, helpful."[3] This particular confirmation is of special interest because it means that Rilke must have seen the lovely antique relief in the National Museum at least twice in those early years. At the time of the second visit the poem, later to be included in the *Neue Gedichte*, had been written, read aloud, and published in *Die Neue Rundschau*, along with "Graves of the Hetaerae" and "Birth of Venus." Rilke wrote Fischer that these were among the few things that stood up under his own judgment.[4]

The date of publication, November 1905, suggests that preoccupation with Orpheus antedated the *Neue Gedichte*, which in 1907 marked Rilke's poetic coming of age. This preoccupation was to find magnificent culmination in the *Sonnets to Orpheus*,[5] fifteen years later. There Orpheus, singing in the first sonnet, is "a tall tree in the ear"; the difficulty of his finding once more the use of the lyre is commemorated in the seventeenth:

> Branch crowding on branch
> Not one of them free . . .
> One! O climb . . . O climb . . .
> But still they break,
> Yet this top one, at last
> bends into a lyre.

Orpheus is no longer the anguished and forsaken bridegroom; he has become "a mouth of nature." This conception is diametrically opposed to the Orpheus of the 1905 poem; for in the *Sonnets* Orpheus is all singing, no longing—all fulfillment, no frustration. As Rilke wrote: "Orpheus wäre mit seiner unendlichen Leyer dem Herrn in die Schöpfung gekommen."[6]

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[3] *Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke; 1897-1910*, translated by Jane Bannard Greene and M. D. Herter Norton (New York, 1945). The notes tell us that the Rilkes had been in Naples "for four days in June, 1904. The poem, *Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes.*, had been written in that year and Rilke had read it aloud at the evening gathering in the Samskola in Sweden in November" (p. 389).

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 390. It may be significant that the three were first published as "Three Poems in Prose."

[5] *Sonnets to Orpheus*, translated by M. D. Herter Norton (New York, 1942).

[6] Quoted in Walter Rehm, *Orpheus: Der Dichter und die Toten* (Düsseldorf, 1950), p. 505.

In Miss Sitwell's poetry "Eurydice" has come late but naturally, the fruit of long preoccupation with sun, death, harvest; and is full of the allusions to classic myth which have been habitual for many of her best writing years. Indeed John Lehmann, to whom the poem "Eurydice" is dedicated, has remarked on this allusiveness: "You will notice that Edith Sitwell takes symbols from the widest range within our common culture, from Classical and Christian legend and history, and even beyond, from the primitive pre-history and shadowy beliefs of Europe."[7]

Coming as it does in Miss Sitwell's most eloquent and earnest maturity, "Eurydice" is beyond that brilliant precocity which we recall in the earlier Sitwell; it is also out of the realm of the war poetry, "Still Falls the Rain." For, although some of the passion in "Eurydice" may have been loosed by contemplation of war and rebirth, it is still an ancient story warm with centuries of literary love; it is because of Eurydice that we read the poem, not because of the Second World War. Stephen Spender has another view of this development,[8] but I think one may find in "Eurydice" "une vaste compréhension tragique de l'humanité" without agreeing further that this is the necessary result of war inspiration. Perhaps it would be more justifiable to say with Frederic Prokosch that these later poems are gloriously attributable to the impassioned "austerity of old age."[9] Whether we have the war to thank or Miss Sitwell's advance in age, wisdom, and passion, the fact remains that "Eurydice" differs from the witty brilliance and technical ingenuity of the earlier Sitwell.

But these are necessarily matters to be discussed after the poems have been read. Let us turn first to Rilke's "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes.," not only because it is earlier than Miss Sitwell's poem but also because she acknowledges her debt to it specifically, quoting a passage in a note to "Eurydice."[10] The passage refers to the girl:

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[7] In *A Celebration for Edith Sitwell on the Occasion of Her Visit to the United States*, ed. José Garcia Villa (New York, 1948), p. 81.

[8] Stephen Spender, "Quelques observations sur la poésie anglaise entre les deux guerres," in *Aspects de la littérature anglaise (1918-1946)*, corrected reedition of *Fontaine* for Dec. 1944, ed. Kathleen Raine and Max-Pol Fouchet, p. 22.

[9] Frederic Prokosch speaks of "Eurydice," "The Poet Laments the Coming of Old Age," "An Old Woman," "A Song of the Cold," as "first of all the outpourings of passion, authoritative and unashamed, graced with the austerity of old age." *A Celebration for Edith Sitwell*, p. 33.

[10] E. Sitwell, *The Canticle of the Rose, Poems: 1917-1949* (New York, 1949), notes, p. 284. Miss Sitwell uses J. B. Leishmann's translations of "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes.," which appeared in Rainer Maria Rilke, *Selected Poems* (London, 1941). Miss Sitwell also acknowledges an adaptation from Rilke's "Geburt der Venus"; see notes, p. 285.

. . . Und ihr Gestorbensein
erfüllte sie wie Fülle.
Wie eine Frucht von Süßigeit und Dunkel,
so war sie voll von ihrem großen Tode . . .[11]

Translated quite literally this reads:

And her deadness
Was filling her with fullness,
Full as a fruit with sweetness and darkness
Was she with her great death.[12]

It is obliging of Miss Sitwell to select this passage, for it represents the core of the German poem and suggests an understandable relation to the English poem; in both there is emphatic celebration of the death that becomes fruit for those who can bring it to harvest. We know that such an attitude on Rilke's part is not peculiar to "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes.," but pervades also his *Sonnets to Orpheus* and the *Duino Elegies*;[13] indeed it is this attitude which unites the sonnets and elegies in praising things most mourned. It is precisely this theme of Rilke's, the "keeping life open towards death,"[14] that Miss Sitwell would find most congenial in his later work. Death as fruit, the death of the translated Eurydice growing in the dark earth (as distinct from the usual life, flowering on earth), is echoed in the sixth elegy[15] and in the seventh sonnet which begins:

Rühmen, das ists! Ein zum Rühmen Bestellter,
ging er hervor wie das Erz aus des Steins
Schweigen . . .

and ends:

Er ist einer der bleibenden Boten,
der noch weit in die Türen der Toten
Schalen mit rühmlichen Früchten hält.[16]

One need only recall the ore image in "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes."

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[11] Rilke, *Neue Gedichte* (Leipzig, 1911-13), I, 91.

[12] J. B. Leishmann, as quoted by Miss Sitwell, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

[13] See particularly the sixth, ninth, and tenth *Duino Elegies*.

[14] Rilke, *Briefe aus Muzot* (Leipzig, 1936), p. 220.

[15] In the sixth elegy the poet calls on the fig tree as representing on earth this fruitfulness which Eurydice achieved through death:

"Fig-tree, how long it's been full of meaning for me.
The way you almost entirely omit to flower
and into the seasonably resolute fruit
uncelebratedly thrust your purest secret . . .
But we, we linger,
Alas we glory in flowering; already betrayed
we reach the retarded core of our ultimate fruit."

Translated by J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender.

[16] *Sonnets to Orpheus*, Part I, Sonnet 7. Cf. M. D. Herter Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

("And they, like silent veins of silver ore, were winding through its darkness") to identify the praiser-poet of the sonnet with his prototype. Rilke's message is "to be always dead in Eurydice."[17]

"Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." is not a painful copy of antiquity, although it was apparently evoked by the enraptured study of a relief in Naples. The poem is like a flight across chasms of consciousness; the psychic is imaged, and yet the tone is constrained, simple, really often reminiscent of Ovid's simplicity. One recalls Ovid's "vastique silentia regni."

Rilke's poem was first published as a "poem in prose,"[18] but its form is rather debatable. There are ninety-five lines of irregular length in stanzas of varying length; the metre is predominantly iambic, and there is no set rhyme. All this seems to establish the form of a German ode in free verse.[19] In a simple ambitious thrust, something great and mysterious in life and death is transfigured, something about art, something suggested to Rilke by the fragment in the museum in Naples.

The relief in question (perhaps a copy of a Greek work of about 400 B.C. in Villa Albani?) is a deceptively simple arrangement; Eurydice in the center says farewell gently to Orpheus at the right, while Hermes watches from the left. The whole is markedly restrained, calm, resigned, recalling the closing lines of Rilke's second elegy:

> On Attic stelês, did not the circumspection
> of human gesture amaze you? Were not love and farewell
> so lightly laid upon shoulders, they seemed to be made
> of other stuff than with us? Remember the hands,
> how they rest without pressure, though power is there
> in the torsos.[20]

The poem is initially a commemoration of a feeling suggested by an exquisite and formal antique relief. If limitation is a condition of great

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[17] "Sei immer tot in Eurydike," *ibid.*, Part II, Sonnet 13. Cf. D. H. Lawrence's poem, "Medlars and Sorb-Apples."

[18] See note 4 above.

[19] A. Closs, *Die freien Rhythmen in der deutschen Lyrik* (Bern, 1947). D. J. Enright, in a review of Dr. Closs's book, remarks that the ode has a significance in German literary history far overshadowing that of the ode in English, and that "free verse was a tradition [in Germany] before it even amounted to an eccentricity in England." *Scrutiny*, XV (1947), 76.

[20] *Duino Elegies*, tr. by J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender, p. 33. On the usual role of Hermes see W. F. Otto, *Die Götter Griechenlands* (Bonn, 1929), and Karl Kerenyi, "Mythology and The Novel: Correspondence between Thomas Mann and Karl Kerenyi," *Chimera*, V (1947), 9. Kerenyi notes: "To the background of Hermes belongs the fact that he is a phallic deity especially in his relation to the dead... For clearly he is 'a spirit of the night,' 'the genius of her benevolence, enchantment, inventiveness and wisdom' (according to Otto)." He is all the things implied by daemonic night, "only translated into something more bold and masculine."

achievement, we may recognize in the marble group that limitation. Yet Rilke does not start with a description of this relief. In fact, he nowhere describes it. Rather he goes back into the deep, undiscoverable "mine of the soul," the psychic depths which lie behind the controlled art of the stelê. Indeed, Hermes seems to be the one sure connection with the relief in Naples. Hermes is a sensible, though sympathetic, link with the mythic past; the gods are friendly, sometimes, but powerless to help. Hermes provides for the outer world a commentary on the sad fate of husband and wife. The god of message can only keep silent anguish, confronted with the loss of human happiness. (Rilke does not suggest Hermes' functions in relation to the dead; his "boldness" is muted by Rilke's sadness.)

Rilke does not show us the happiness which is lost; we have no opening idyll in a grove, the musician singing to his lyre, Eurydice and her maidens enthralled. Rilke's poem begins with the journey back from Pluto's realm. "That was the strange unfathomable mine of souls" introduces the magnificent controlling image. Orpheus with his lyre has already made Pluto weep his iron tears, but we hear nothing of them. This is the streaking journey back to the land of the living; it is a silent, burdened, harried, almost phantasmagoric journey. A journey through

> ... Brücken über Leeres
> und jener große, graue, blinde Teich
> der über seinem fernen Grunde hing
> wie Regenhimmel über einer Landschaft.

Orpheus' lyre is forgotten and hangs "grown into" his hand, a mute reminder of forfeit happiness, a burden. The lyre is forgotten "wie Rosenranken in den Ast des Ölbaums"; all music is displaced in this cavernous mine of souls:

> Das war der Seelen wunderliches Bergwerk.
> Wie stille Silbererze gingen sie
> als Adern durch sein Dunkel. Zwischen Wurzeln
> entsprang das Blut, das fortgeht zu den Menschen,
> und schwer wie Porphyr sah es aus im Dunkel.
> Sonst war nichts Rotes.

The veins of silver ore are these three traveling back to the world above ground, but this is not an easy coming; the paths of silver ore *wind* through the dark between roots red with blood like heavy porphyry. Let us look more closely at a passage.

The stanza from which we have quoted "Brücken über Leeres" begins abruptly:

> Felsen war da

a jagged line with a purpose. Difficulty is there in the simple, stated

presence of the rocks; then follow "wesenlose Wälder." Wildly impassable, dreamlike is the tenuousness of "Brücken über Leeres," harsh yet empty sounds, overhung as if with grey sky. Again one has a memory of Ovid:

> Carpitur acclivis per muta silentia trames.
> Arduus, obscurus, caligine densus opaca.[21]

And now, in a beautiful calm not to be dreamt of after the initial harshness, the stanza ends. The path laid down for the travelers is between meadows, "sanft und voller Langmut, "like linen laid out to bleach." Moreover, the line which announces this coming stands alone on the page between stanzas:

> Und dieses einen Weges kamen sie

—a path cut straight through the poem.

Leading comes Orpheus, "der schlanke Mann im blauen Mantel"; far behind are the precariously recovered bride and the god of faring. Orpheus is not, like the meadows, "soft and full of patience," but rather "stumm und ungeduldig"; his steps devour the way in great bites, his hands hang "schwer und verschlossen" from the cloak, no longer aware of his lyre. Rilke uses the dog to figure Orpheus' senses, divided, running ahead, coming back to stand at the turn of the path. There "blieb sein Gehör wie ein Geruch zurück"; note how the sound of "Geruch zurück" lags behind with the meaning. But he was not dog but man, and behind him no sound but his own echo, a clang of desolation in the phrase "nur seines Steigens Nachklang und seines Mantels Wind." The lightness of their step was fearful so that he could never quite catch the sound of their footsteps. If only once he dared look back? The hard condition rings out in the silence. But he must not disobey the command of the ruler of darkness.[22]

What of Eurydice and Hermes? They are both light-footed, silent, the shining eyes of the god of faring hooded, a slender wand before him, his ankle-wings beating lightly. Eurydice is hand in hand with

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[21] *Metamorphoses*, X, 53-54.

[22] Rilke does not say whether Pluto or Proserpina made the condition, but in the last stanza someone stands "dark in the bright exit," watching Eurydice's return to Hades. This "someone" suggests Pluto rather than Proserpina. Virgil (*Georgics*, IV) makes Proserpina deliver the ultimatum, and in Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, X) Orpheus makes his plea to both Persephone and Pluto. The story is retold with an added stoic moral by Boethius (*Consolation of Philosophy*, 3). There Pluto has taken Persephone's role: "At last the lord of the shades in pity cried: 'We are conquered; take your bride with you, bought by your song; but one condition binds our gift: till she has left these dark abodes, turn not your eyes upon her.' Who shall set a law to lovers? Love is a greater law unto itself. Alack! at the very bounds of darkness Orpheus looked upon his Eurydice; looked, and lost her, and was lost himself. To you too this tale refers; you, who seek to lead your thoughts to the light above. For whosoever is overcome of desire and turns his gaze upon the darkness 'neath the earth, he, while he looks on hell, loses the prize he carried off."

Hermes, but her steps are encircled and shortened by the clinging graveclothes[23] and she comes "unsicher, sanft und ohne Ungeduld." Her patience, somehow like the graveclothes, enwraps her, and ascending into life she has no thought for husband or earthly existence. "Sie war in sich." Nevertheless she is so beloved by Orpheus that a whole new world of mourning is called into being. Here are Rilke's lines:

> Die So-geliebte, daß aus einer Leier
> mehr Klage kam als je aus Klagefrauen;
> daß eine Welt aus Klage ward, in der
> alles noch einmal da war: Wald und Tal
> und Weg und Ortschaft, Feld und Fluß und Tier;
> um daß um diese Klage-Welt ganz so
> wie um die andre Erde eine Sonne
> und ein gestirnter stiller Himmel ging,
> ein Klage-Himmel mit entstellten Sternen—:
> diese So-geliebte.

Eurydice, so beloved, is the center of the story as it has been resung from antiquity. It is this maiden for whom Virgil and Ovid call out, lost forever in a resonant earth; this maiden Poussin paints bitten by the adder in the deep woods.[24] But Rilke's poem, having centered gently in this old lament, now moves forward into something else. For him pure classicism is now impossible; of the poet he writes:

> His mind is division. At the crossing of the heartways
> There's no temple for Apollo.[25]

Already Rilke's Eurydice has left her classic relief and bears her fruitful death:

> Und ihr Gestorbensein
> erfüllte sie wie Fülle.
> Wie eine Frucht von Süßigkeit und Dunkel,
> so war sie voll von ihrem großen Tode,
> der also neu war, daß sie nichts begriff.

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[23] Cf. Ovid's description (*Metamorphoses*, X, 48-49) of Eurydice as she is brought to Orpheus from the depths of Dis's realm:

> "Eurydicenque vocant. Umbras erat illa recentes
> Inter: et incessit passu de vulnere tardo."

[24] Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X, 10, and Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 523-7. Virgil carries the main theme, Orpheus' *loss*, to the very end, after the demigod's death at the hands of the Thracian women. His severed head rolls down the water of Hebrus, calling for his Eurydice, and the banks re-echo her name:

> "Tum quoque, marmores caput a cervice revolsam
> gurgite cum medio portans Aeagrines Hebrua
> valueret, 'Eurydicen' vox ipsa et frigida lingua
> 'a miseram Eurydicen' anima fugiente vocabat.
> 'Eurydicen' toto referebant flumine ripae."

Poussin's *Orpheus and Eurydice* in the Louvre shows a tranquil background for the fatal accident. However, in an earlier version the natural scene had writhed in agony for Eurydice's plight.

[25] *Sonnets to Orpheus*, Part I, Sonnet 3.

She is in a new maidenhood, her sex has closed like a young flower at the approach of evening. So unaccustomed to physical existence has she become that the slight pressure of Hermes' hand seems too much. She is now "nicht mehr des breiten Bettes Duft und Eiland." Instead, she is being transformed into something impersonal as rain, mere root:

> Sie war schon aufgelöst wie langes Haar
> und hingegeben wie gefallner Regen
> und ausgeteilt wie hundertfacher Vorrat.

No English can translate the catch of this last line with its "t's" after the soft "n's" and "g's" of the falling rain. Indeed, "Sie war schon Wurzel."

Suddenly Hermes' own anguish breaks out, an explosion of "t's":

> der Gott sie anhielt und mit Schmerz in Ausruf
> die Worte sprach: Er hat sich umgewendet—

to which she replied lightly "Wer?" This is Orpheus' moment of supreme negation; he is dispossessed even of Eurydice's memory of him. In Virgil and Ovid she at least called farewell, and spoke of her love as enduring.[26] But here these roots might never have been girl; bride and bridegroom never existed.

Rilke does not give the reader over to Orpheus' sorrow; we are removed quickly in the last swift stanza to that bright exit, far off, where stands the mysterious figure, dark, blocking the light, the figure whose face is not to be discovered. Pluto, gloomy Dis, we can only imagine. And from that distance—remote from Orpheus, on the brink of Hades—we watch with Pluto the lovely prize being returned over the strip of meadow path which had earlier suggested the peace to which Eurydice and Orpheus were being restored. Hermes leads her back:

> den Schritt beschränkt von langen Leichenbändern,
> unsicher, sanft und ohne Ungeduld.

With these lines, repeated in precise syllables from the middle stanza, the poem ends.

The poem ends with a retreat into Pluto's lands, Eurydice lost forever, as in the old myth; but here the young girl advances into a new heaven and a new earth to bear her individual death.[27] She is "uncertain, gentle, without impatience," a phrase Rilke uses twice (first as line 59, and second as line 95, the last). Is this not an implicit pre-

[26] Cf. Virgil, *Georgics*, IV: "Cruel fates call me back"; and Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X, 62-63:

> "Supremumque vale, quod iam vix auribus ille
> acciperet, dixit, revolutaque rursus eodem est."

[27] It seems worthy of note that in his *Neue Gedichte* Rilke placed the poem next to "Alkestis," another classical story of death undertaken for the living.

scription for humility? Of Orpheus' doom at the hands of the Maenads Rilke speaks no word. It is Eurydice's new life that engrosses the modern poet.

One cannot forbear a last look at the relief of which Rilke wrote to his wife. These classic figures recall that "farewell so lightly laid upon shoulders." But in the relief it is a loving wife, a fully conscious woman (to judge by her attitude), who bids farewell to a sorrowing husband, Hermes gently looking on. Rilke's sense of this woman as already metamorphosed, "already roots and fallen rain," is certainly not suggested by the relief. Perhaps the poem in itself is a "miracle recovery-work of the soul."

"Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." is a work of shaping, rather than feeling, and thus stands significantly in Rilke's history. He was aware in *Requiem* (1909) that his old way of writing (*Das Stundenbuch*, for example) must be renounced. In *Requiem* he wrote:

> O alter Fluch der Dichter,
> Die sich beklagen, wo Sie sagen sollten,
> Die immer urteiln über ihr Gefühl,
> Statt es zu bilden.

It should be emphasized that Rilke's new shapes are not the classicist's shapes, nor is he longing for a past age in a romantic haze. "His song is being, simply, not longing, not dream of the Greek ideal, but a powerful reality in itself."[28]

In Edith Sitwell's poem the young bride has been of Pluto's realm since time immemorial, and from this realm she salutes the living in a volley of warmth.

> Fires on the hearth! Fires in the heavens! Fires in the hearts
> of Men!
> I who was welded into bright gold in the earth by Death
> Salute you!

She has been disengaged of any human quality which trailed the German maiden; she has become goddess, "bright gold in the earth," the power of love. In another frenetic passage she proclaims,

> ... O bright gold of the heat of the Sun
> Of Love across dark fields—burning away rough husks of Death
> Till all is fire, and bringing all to harvest!

Perhaps the first aesthetic impact from this opening is of the long, loose prophetic line, continuing through eight-two lines. The tone is brilliantly golden as compared with the silver ore through the darkness of Rilke's underground. And it is sunlike in its unrestraint. The poem opens with a resounding line, broken into three parts, and roughly of

[28] Translated from A. Closs, *Die freien Rhythmen in der deutschen Lyrik.*

an eight-stress measure; this line is somewhat shortened by the following lines, but reaches the pitch of the penultimate line of the stanza just quoted. This is verse looser than the four or five stressed lines Miss Sitwell has more often used in the past. It is perhaps adapted to the more passionate expression of her work from 1940 to the present. We should avoid referring to her verse as "free"; she points out with Mr. T. S. Eliot, "the term is a loose one . . . any verse is called free by people whose ears are unaccustomed to it."[29] But whatever the structure may be called, there *is* a structure; it is true that this structure may strike the reader first as rather "irrational," but Miss Sitwell has told us elsewhere that there is a reason for the effect of irrationality in any art, "contained in a structure of the purest and most logical form."[30] One may note that Rilke's ode is of similar design. More of this later.

In the third line Eurydice proclaims:

> . . . All the weight of Death in all the world
> Yet does not equal Love—the great compassion
> For the fallen dust and all fallen creatures, quickening
> As is the Sun in the void firmament.

This passage seems pure statement, and I am afraid that even the "I" sounds do not save it from the heaviness of its pretensions. It is a statement which is, moreover, reinforced in the next stanza, where Eurydice announces

> . . . a word from Darkness
> That Death, too, has compassion for all fallen Nature.

But in the lines immediately following this reassurance there is a simile to carry Eurydice's message:

> For as the Sun buries his hot days and rays
> To ripen in the earth, so the great rays of the heart
> Are ripened to wisdom by Death, and great is our forgiveness.

Now that the function of all-ripening Death has been established in

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[29] Eliot, quoted by Edith Sitwell in "Experiment in Poetry," a lecture published in the volume *Tradition and Experiment in Present-Day Literature*, ed. T. G. Williams (London, 1929), p. 85.

[30] Edith Sitwell, *ibid.*, p. 85, in defending modern art (and poetry), said that "All great art contains an element of the irrational. One might almost say that art is the irrational spirit contained in a structure of the purest and most logical form. Without that logical form or architecture the irrational does, of course, become lunacy. The irrational spirit in logical form produced such creators as Shakespeare, Michael Angelo, da Vinci, Beethoven . . . Art is magic, not logic." And further ". . . the people who are doing work of any importance in poetry today are returning to classicism of structure, as a protest against anarchism, and free verse has just as much organic form (form arising from the properties of the material) as any other verse" (*ibid.*, p. 93). One may note the insistence on magic through form.

the first two stanzas, the poet recalls Orpheus. This third stanza begins:

> When through the darkness Orpheus came with his Sunlike
> singing...

But this singing was

> Like the movements in the heavens that in our blindness
> Could we but emulate, would set right our lives—

Eurydice says that because of such singing she "came to the mouth of the Tomb." Why, one may ask? Orpheus' singing may certainly have been sunlike (although it seems to me Miss Sitwell overloads the sun) and it may also have been like the movements in the heavens, but all this splendor seems negated in the relative clause which follows in abstract didactics. The question is whether Miss Sitwell has really found a "magic" to suggest the song of Orpheus or whether she may not have dissipated its force in the expansiveness of rhetoric. And here one of course recalls Yeats' definition of rhetoric.[31] I find fault with this simile partly because it is followed by the stanza which I find most perfect in the poem; the contrast in method is too obvious to go unremarked.

The fourth stanza, content to give the golden maid against dark fields, is a movement which represents what power Miss Sitwell has mastery of when she depends on imagination to do its own work.

> In the lateness of the season, I with the golden feet
> That had walked in the fields of Death, now walk again
> The dark fields where the sowers scatter grain
> Like tears or the constellations that weep for the likeness of
> the season—
> Where the women walk like mourners, like the Afternoon
> ripened, with their bent heads;
> Their golden eyelids, like the drifts of the narcissus
> In spring, are wet with their tears. They mourn for a young
> wife who had walked these fields
> —So young, not yet had Proserpina tied up her golden hair
> In a knot like the branchèd corn... So good was she—
> With a voice like the sweet swallow. She lies in the silent Tomb,
> And they walk in the fields alone.

In this lament for Proserpina, one has in the "branchèd corn" not only an echo of what "cost Ceres all that pain" but a remembrance of Rilke's lines: "Sie, Die so-geliebte" that a whole world of mourning rose, "wood and vale and road and hamlet, field, stream and beast," and another sun turned round this world of mourning with its "silent heaven full of distorted stars."

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[31] "For what is rhetoric but the will trying to do the work of the imagination?" Quoted by Allen Tate, *Reactionary Essays* (New York, 1936), p. 91.

But now Miss Sitwell introduces another mortal who became divine through death, in an evocation of the drowned Osiris. Osiris himself is not in the poem, only

> Beneath the earth, like the water-dark, the water-thin
> Effigy of Osiris, with a face green as a moon—

someone of the dead speaks. Here the allusion is further complicated. The words spoken are not Osiris' words, but are the words of someone who has read Meister Eckhart; Eckhart's words are identified in Miss Sitwell's notes.[32]

> ... 'We have been blind and stripped God naked of things
> To see the light which shines in the dark, and we have learned
> That the gold flame of the wheat may spring from a barren
> heart.'

Two questions arise out of these lines, quite apart from the question of their separate meaning or message. The first is the question of propriety. Does the allusion to an effigy of Osiris fuse with words from the mediaeval theologian? The second question is larger. Granted for the moment that these two allusions do fuse, do they seem happy in the story of Eurydice? I must answer both questions in the negative. One has only to compare these allusions with that beautiful one to Proserpina just preceding to see the advantage of a decorum in allusiveness. (On the level of *meaning*, of course, it is quite proper that Osiris and Christ should be recalled in a passage of classic regeneration.)

The stanza which follows the Osiris-Eckhart passage has no demonstrable connection with it, but presumably the "I" is still Eurydice. The wrench from the dark fields of the dead is not eased by transition; rather there is an abrupt beginning.

> When I came down from the Metropolis of the Corn,
> Then said the ferine dust that reared about me,
> 'I have the famine of the lion, all things devour,
> Or make them mine... Venus was powerful as me—
> Now is she but a handful of dry amber dust;...

This communication from the "ferine dust" does not lighten Eurydice's fate, but is a magic of which Miss Sitwell is very fond; the lion and Venus can be traced throughout the "Elegy on Dead Fashion" forward to the present.

Afar off Eurydice hears the "noise of the dark wild bees" and there in a new metaphor demonstrates the power of metamorphosis within the dark earth.

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[32] *The Canticle of the Rose*, notes, p. 284; quoting Meister Eckhart, *Sermons and Collations*, XIX.

> ... Her heart, that honeycomb,
> Thick Darkness like a bear devours .... See, all the gold is gone!
> The cell of the honeycomb is six-sided .... But there, in the five cells of the senses,
> Is stored all their gold .... Where is it now? Only the wind of the Tomb can know.

Here, it seems to me, is real power, a simplicity in concreteness, just possibly marred by the rather facile "wind of the Tomb." The stanza, however, does not close with these sweetly evocative lines, but concludes:

> But I feared not that stilled and chilling breath
> Among the dust .... Love is not changed by Death,
> And nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest.

Unfortunately, assertion alone cannot bring the harvest. And though we may know with our heads that the metabolism of the universe is a conservation of energy, Miss Sitwell would do better to rely on her "five cells of the senses" to tell us that.

The penultimate stanza introduces the sun and the lion once more, this time fused, and echoing the "hot days and rays" of the second stanza. The movement does not seem abrupt because, in the honeycomb heart of the youthfully dead, we have been made dimly conscious of that ancient riddle, Samson with the lion and the honeycomb, a symbol of meaning for Miss Sitwell elsewhere,[33] and now modulating our ear to the sound of the quite unrelated words:

> As the earth is heavy with the lion-strong Sun
> When he has fallen, with his hot days and rays,
> We are heavy with Death, as a woman is heavy with child,
> As the corn-husk holds its ripeness, the gold comb
> Its weight of summer .... But as if a lump of gold had changed to corn,
> So did my Life from my Death. I cast the grandeur of Death away
> And homeward came to the small things of Love ...

Perhaps heaviness is a virtue in a poem centering in Eurydice's bearing of Death as a fruit, and it is in the lines making death-bearing like

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[33] Cf. the beautiful first poem from *The Canticle of the Rose*, "The Bee Oracles," relying on the Upanishads:

> "This Earth is the honey of all Beings, and all Beings
> Are the honey of this Earth ..."

and

> "only the cold
> Wind from the honey-hive can know
> If still from strength comes sweetness—if from the lion-heart
> The winged swarms rise!"

Page 240. Cf. Judges 15.

child-bearing that Miss Sitwell acknowledges her debt to Rilke's poem.[34] Again, with the words, "the small things of Love," one thinks involuntarily of Rilke's devotion to "Dinge" and of his expression of this theme in his ninth Duino elegy.[35] Certainly he also advises us to "cast the grandeur of Death away."

Now Eurydice returns to "the mouth of the Tomb" there to stand with Orpheus, who was

> Like Adonis born from the young myrrh-tree, you, the
> vine-branch
> Broken by the wind of Love ... I turned to greet you—
> And when I touched your mouth, it was the Sun.

Is this a final metaphor to transfigure Orpheus' sorrow and agony into the harvest, as Eurydice is transfigured into earth? Certainly the reference to Adonis is another side of the Osiris-effigy, suggesting the violently dead but resurrected god. Is this then to be understood as Orpheus' future? One of the most effective correspondences in the poem is the "golden mouth" of Orpheus, the sun ultimately, and the dark-bright "mouth of the Tomb." For it is there in that darkness that the gold grows into corn.

When one reads aloud the two poems, both so nearly odes, so without the assistance (or hindrance) of rhyme or easily recognized metre, I think one becomes a little weary. Lest this should sound ungrateful, let me say that the classic theme has evoked great lines and even whole movements, illuminating the careers of both poets; and that the return to the classic for basic metaphor for this life of the present seems fundamentally a healthy poetic method. But for me Rilke's poem is more satisfying than Miss Sitwell's.

If one looks for the sources of dissatisfaction one can only repeat: the rather long unwound lines[36] of "Eurydice"—especially when they embody explanation of, rather than intensification of, a metaphor, or

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[34] *Ibid.*, notes, p. 284. Cf. 10 above.

[35] Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, tr. by J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender, p. 75:

> "—Are we, perhaps, here just for saying: House
> Bridge, Fountain, Gate, Jug, Olive Tree, Window,—
> possibly: Pillar, Tower?"

and further:

> "Praise the world to the Angel, not the untellable: you
> can't impress him with the splendour you've felt."

[36] T. S. Eliot has his own filiations with the blank verse of the Elizabethans and the *vers libre* of Jules Laforgue, and we should recall his dictum on the necessity of a ground rhythm in free verse: "The ghost of some simple metre should lurk behind the arras in even the 'freest' verse, to advance menacingly as we doze, and withdraw as we rouse." The question in my mind is whether Miss Sitwell, so often a past mistress of the art of persuasive rhythms behind the ironic "arras," is in "Eurydice" making use of a ground rhythm sufficient for the reader's pleasurable recognition.

when they represent the poet's symbols from previous poems, now refocused in a frenetic outpouring—are wearying. The unhappy point is that Miss Sitwell feels that these very methods—irregularity approaching complete rhythmic freedom, extension rather than compression, and, paradoxically, re-use of symbols which involves a compression of meaning depending on the reader's past careful perusal of Miss Sitwell's poetry as a whole—are virtues rather than pitfalls. She writes for example:

> My time of experiments was done [i.e., after the poetry immediately preceding "Eurydice"].
>
> Now, for the most part, I use lines of great length—(these need considerable technical control)—sometimes unrhymed, but with occasional rhymes, assonances, and half-assonances, used, outwardly and inwardly in these lines, to act as a ground rhythm. [Here Miss Sitwell quotes Whitman on the beauty of a free growth of lines which bud "as unerringly and loosely as lilacs or roses on a bush."]
>
> With such long lines, I wrote of Harvest.[37]

Actually of course the long line of "Harvest" and "Eurydice" seems to be the most risky of experiments, quite "loose" but not always "unerring." And although Miss Sitwell's justification of a looser form is rational, I cannot think she has proved that "considerable technical control" which she so openly avows.

To turn from the first dissatisfaction to a second, one needs only to recall the passage of "Eurydice" beginning "All the weight of Death in all the world"; or "Bringing a word from Darkness / That Death, too, has compassion for all fallen Nature"; or "Like the movements in the heavens that in our blindness / could we but emulate, would set right our lives—"; or the quotation from Meister Eckhart; or "Love is not changed by Death." My feeling is simply of heaviness in these lines, as if Miss Sitwell could not trust her own imagery, rich and perfect as it can be (think of the honeycomb of the senses), but must reiterate, explain all the life out of the poetry.

It is easy to see how, having espoused one method, a poet may find the rest following. Let us say that Miss Sitwell perhaps really felt that a longer line would be more natural; then the temptation might be to let it carry more than its weight until it became prose statement and amplification of poetry (which is still, heaven be praised, buried in the heart of any and all of Miss Sitwell's pieces). The third sin (or virtue, whichever it may be) is organically a part of the prophetic mood of that long line. The re-use of symbols is a subject to which Miss Sitwell has devoted much thought. Sometimes, as in "Heart and Mind," her lion and sun fuse into memorable poetry, and, as I have said, the lion in "Eurydice" seems to me to have meanings which are brilliantly com-

[37] "Some Notes on My Own Poetry," in *The Canticle of the Rose*, p. xxxiii.

municated, however much these meanings may be deepened by wider reading in Miss Sitwell's work as a whole. But I do not feel that reiteration of personal symbols is always effective, whether in Yeats, Rilke, Eliot, or Sitwell. Of course each case is its own test. For this reason I must differ with Mr. Bowra, who apparently finds that the habit of reincorporating symbols from earlier poems is satisfying willy nilly.[38] Miss Sitwell has said that in her poems "all expression is welded into an image, not removed into a symbol that is inexact or squandered into a metaphor."[39] (I confess that this distinction of image

[38] C. M. Bowra, *Edith Sitwell* (Monaco, 1947), p. 18.

[39] As quoted by Kenneth Clark, "On the Development of Miss Sitwell's Later Style," in *A Celebration for Edith Sitwell*, p. 66. In this essay, on the whole very helpful, Mr. Clark draws comparisons between Yeats' and Miss Sitwell's use of the reiterated symbol. His conclusions seem to be in favor of Miss Sitwell; I quote: "Miss Sitwell does not, like Yeats, use symbols with fixed meanings. She has said of poems that 'all expression is welded into an image,' (etc.). The result is that although her poems may sometimes be vaguer than those of a strict symbolist, they are more vivid and more flexible, and they never become mere riddles, as are some of the minor poems of Mallarmé." I have already noted my confusion in reading Miss Sitwell's distinction of symbol-metaphor-image, but I now must add that Mr. Clark's judgment is almost meaningless to me. If Miss Sitwell's recurrent symbols (or I suppose we should say "images") are not "fixed" in meaning, why do they often sound as if repeated verbatim from an earlier poem? Or, if they are "vaguer than those of a strict symbolist," how can they be at the same time "more vivid"? "More flexible," I can understand. But if one is flexible at the risk of vagueness one had perhaps better remain "fixed" with Yeats. Let us take an example. Yeats uses "perne and gyre" in his later poetry. (This seems to be a useful method in prophetic verse.) Donald Stauffer in *The Golden Nightingale* (New York, 1949), *passim*, has illustrated the ways in which these "symbols," seemingly "fixed," really are on the move and change constantly from context to context, from poem to poem. Perhaps Mr. Clark means "arbitrary" rather than "fixed." On the other hand Miss Sitwell speaks of the sun in "O bitter love, O Death . . ."

> "I was a great gold-sinewed King. I had a lion's mane
> Like the raging Sun . . ."

in "Metamorphosis":

> "He comes, our Sun to melt the eternal ice
> Of Death, the crusts of Time round the shrunken Soul —"

and in "Eurydice":

> "—O bright gold of the heat of the Sun
> Of Love across dark fields—"
> "The Sun whose Body was spilt on our fields to
> bring us harvest,—"

But this catalogue may be abruptly closed with the magnificent opening of "Heart and Mind":

> "Said the Lion to the Lioness—'When you are amber dust,—
> No more a raging fire like the heat of the Sun
> (No liking but all lust)—'"

Perhaps each one of these passages evoking the sun is poetically just. But how does one prove that they are, as Mr. Clark remarks, "more vivid and more flexible" than Yeats' tower, his swan, or his gyre? Perhaps neither poet is *always* justified in the repetition, or, indeed, in the *re-use* which sounds to the

from symbol from metaphor is very hard to grasp, and I record it here only to show the importance that her method has for her as a poet.)

It is, of course, vain to wish that Miss Sitwell had written her "Eurydice" in more restrained mood. Nevertheless, one cannot compare this poem with others of the same poet without a feeling of disappointment. In "Daphne" she has a somewhat similar subject, but its splendors far surpass those of "Eurydice." Here, with no orthodox rhymes, Daphne's story is suggested, never told, and its meanings for the "desert heart" are manifold without prophetic proclamation. In sixteen lines of iambic pentameter the piece is like some rich overmeasured blank-verse sonnet, depending on assonance and half-assonance, which Miss Sitwell thought she had depended upon in "Eurydice." Or think of these lines from "Harvest," written near "Eurydice":

> For those who build great mornings for the world
> From Edens of lost light seen in each other's eyes,
> Yet soon must wear no more of the light of the Sun
> But say farewell among the morning sorrows.

No rhyme again, but a real control; how the "morning" sounds resound to suggest in the last line a mourning; how "lost light" is echoed in "light of the Sun"; how the up*build*ing of the "world" is dissipated in the "morning sorrows"—all shadowed after brilliance.

This is the poet who has quickened English poetry into that "Vita Nuova of Baroque Art" of which Mr. Horace Gregory writes.[40] Mr. Gregory is thinking of the baroque as a style which in Roger Fry's definition is "the utmost possible enlargement of a unit of design."[41] If this definition be valid (we cannot here enter the tremendous literature of the baroque[42]), we cannot doubt that "Daphne" is such an en-

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reader like a *repetition* of symbols which for the poet are ever-growing values. The whole discussion seems nonsense, but I cannot resist calling Mr. Clark's logic to some account. One may as reasonably find Miss Sitwell as "fixed" as Yeats. Rilke's use of progressing yet perhaps, to the reader, repetitious symbol is manifest in his devotion to angels, acrobats, creatures who have also a quite arbitrary meaning for the poet. I have tried to point out, however, that this kind of symbolic "short-hand" (to borrow a phrase from Donald Stauffer's essays on Yeats) does not *of necessity* invalidate a poem. Nor does it *of necessity* enrich that poem. "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." is remarkably free of reiterative symbols, primarily because it stands at the *beginning* of a lifetime of reworking the Orpheus theme. "Eurydice," perhaps because it stands nearer the close of Miss Sitwell's development, shows the marks of those preoccupations, as do Yeats' later poems.

[40] "The 'Vita Nuova' of Baroque Art in the Recent Poetry of Edith Sitwell," *Poetry*, LXVI (1945), 148-156.

[41] Quoted by Horace Gregory in "The Recent Prose and Poetry of Edith Sitwell," *A Celebration for Edith Sitwell*, p. 37.

[42] We cannot pretend to pass judgment on the propriety of Fry's definition of the baroque. The limitations of the word, whether one thinks primarily of a period or of a sensibility recurrent through many periods, are quite beyond the scope of this essay. For scholarly interpretation of the concept, see René Wellek,

largement, or that "Elegy on Dead Fashion" (whose nymphs walk "with elegant footsteps through light leaves / Where only elegiac air now grieves—") is an enlargement of the rococo, with notes that just sound a little of the prophecy which is to come in the later poems. And this is the poet whose best work belies her words: "The myths of Earth are dead." For her power of resuscitation is great and is to be cherished for all its glories, both of form and tone. "Eurydice" may be called a baroque treatment[43] of the classic idea if one follows Mr. Gregory and Roger Fry. For it is certainly "the utmost possible enlargement of a unit of design."

"Eurydice" probably seems satisfying to Miss Sitwell because it asserts a belief, won after a long and creative life, that is simple in outline—the sun of gold is equal to love, a force that returns Eurydice at last to the "new climate" "a serene afternoon." But so much gift of prophecy goes into this simple assertion, so much Dionysian fury, that the important fusion of idea into poetry has not taken place, as it must, in every line of the poem. Thus, as we saw before in discussing the long line and the recurrent symbol, the end of the poetry (prophecy for its own sake?) seems to dictate, and, perhaps for Miss Sitwell, to justify, allusiveness which sometimes distracts where it should reinforce an original meaning.

As allusions go, for example, that to the word of Meister Eckhart remains starkly outside the pagan world of the poem—not because the poet has no right to take allusions from the mediaeval world, if she chooses, but because this particular allusion (being almost straight quotation and unmodulated in its introduction into the poem) is not assimilated into the old myth or its modern reformation. On the other hand, the reference to the effigy of Osiris seems less obtrusive because it suggests something about the translation of the earth's dead into the living spirit, which is meant to be true both of Eurydice and of Orpheus' "Sunlike singing." For the Proserpina passage I have only the highest praise, again not merely because it comes quite naturally from Eurydice's classic story, but because it suggests that other maidens have survived "death's other kingdom."[44]

The use of allusion is, of course, justified by the greater richness of

"The Concept of the Baroque in Literary History," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, IV (1946), 77 ff., and Ernest C. Hassold, "The Baroque as a Basic Concept of Art," *College Art Journal*, VI (1946), 3-28.

[43] I must add that there is immense difference between the baroque of "Eurydice" and the superb baroque of "Tears," for example.

[44] Arthur Waley, "A Note on Edith Sitwell's Poetry," in *A Celebration for Edith Sitwell*, p. 88, objects to Proserpina's being left in the "silent tomb," on the grounds that she was arranged for happily in the spring, summer, fall, winter cycle. But Miss Sitwell, *The Canticle of the Rose*, p. 284, traces her note to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

texture it makes possible, and is, of course, a "baroque" technique of great advantage in enclosing material outside classic myth in the enlarged form. Once more, the image with which the poem closes seems eminently acceptable. Adonis born of the myrrh-tree is like Orpheus; both die to be born again, divinities for their people. I do not feel that the references to Proserpina, Osiris, and Adonis are too much for the central myth to bear. Arthur Waley has said that they work as "ethnological parallels rather than as flowerings of the Orpheus myth itself . . . For these and other reasons I do not feel that the mythology is integrated into the poem so successfully" as in other Sitwell poems.[45] I discount this criticism as I should a similar criticism of *The Waste Land*.

A more serious criticism by Mr. Waley involves the purpose of the poem and the use of mythology to support its theme. He writes: "Recently Miss Sitwell, as though she too felt that she needed the help of an accepted mythology for her Death poems, has used the story of Orpheus and Eurydice."[46] However, I do not feel that this really represents Miss Sitwell's case. Although it seems fairly obvious that "Eurydice" does reaffirm an attitude toward life and death, surely the use of myth to embody this attitude is a prerogative of any poet. As we have noted, Rilke does exactly this same thing, but the didacticism is not so "surface" as Miss Sitwell's. But in both poems the classic story is retold for the sake of the modern sensibility. Transformation of myth for the "ulterior motive" of speaking a message which cannot be conveyed otherwise is surely a poetic method; the question of awkwardness and grace is the real question for the art. We should ask whether the metaphor can bear the thought, the words convey the proposition, the sound make memorable the meaning. My quarrel with Miss Sitwell's poem is only at those rather crucial points where transformation is not accomplished, where prose glosses attempt the work of the poetry,[47] where overworked symbols confuse and benumb the reader.

Of Rilke's poem one must ask similar questions. He also reworks antique matter for the sake of his own idea, of the bearing of an individual destiny of life-and-death. But are passages in his poem superfluous restatements of metaphor, explanations in prose, extraneous and disruptive? As I have suggested, "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." seems economical and functioning in every line. The key to this

[45] Arthur Waley, *loc. cit.*, p. 88.

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] I am at variance with Mr. Bowra, who finds in Miss Sitwell's poetry "no hackneyed phraseology, no vague, vast words, no lapse into unimaginative flatness." *Edith Sitwell*, p. 30. I agree in principle that Miss Sitwell is a fine poet; I do not feel that these words can be taken literally in the case of poems like "Eurydice."

economy may be the effect of staying quite close to the myth and to its three figures from the relief, with the figure of Pluto, unnamed, darkening the close of the poem. Miss Sitwell is interested primarily in Eurydice, and mentions Orpheus only in a rather peripheral way. Rilke (although his chief figure is certainly also Eurydice, bearing her death like a fruit) makes a conscious entry into Orpheus' mind, that threatened, bewildered, abandoned creature (a dog) before he became a transcendent god. He shows Hermes as a sympathetic, life-size, young immortal who looks on perplexed at human disaster.

Thus Rilke's poem is both more remote and more immediate than Miss Sitwell's—more remote because we are placed back in that preclassic time, in that "strange, unfathomable mine of souls," and more immediate because we are kept there from this first magnificent line to the last in which Eurydice is returned to Pluto. Once in this remote antique "mine of souls" we do not escape. The poet does not stop to tell us *how* his Eurydice will be transfigured; she becomes "root" before our eyes. After we have reread the poem, its meanings begin to cluster about the theme of a natural fruitful death; but inside the poem we are neither exhorted nor reassured by the poet, but are shown that dark inside of the earth. In contrast, of course, we might say that Miss Sitwell's opening line—"Fires on the hearth! Fires in the heavens! Fires in the hearts of men!" tends to liberate the reader at once from the concentration required; the reader is set loose in three realms at once, and enters Eurydice's experience only by being addressed by her, a device which of itself is formal and divisive, less immediate.

When we remark that Rilke stays closer to the classic myth than does Miss Sitwell,[48] we should add that he does not emphasize all that has traditionally been emphasized in that story. We miss the great song for which Orpheus is famed, and which Rilke himself celebrates in his *Orpheus-Sonnetten*. Werner Kohlschmidt has remarked: "Rilke gleitet das Motiv [of Orpheus' art of song] unter den Händen aus dem Bereich der die Tragik bewirkenden Ungeduld des Orpheus."[49] Patience became a key to the problem of existence. The song of Orpheus was not at the moment important to Rilke; thus his bereavement, so moving in Virgil and Ovid, is passed over in "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." For the becoming a part of the other space or realm, as in "Alkestis,"[50] is the main figure. But in Rilke's poem this

[48] There are no references to Osiris, Christ, Adonis, Proserpina in "Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes."

[49] Werner Kohlschmidt, *Rilke: Interpretationen* (Lahr, 1948), p. 45.

[50] Cf. Werner Günther, *Weltinnenraum: Die Dichtung Rainer Maria Rilkes* (Bern-Leipzig, 1943), p. 112: "Beide, Alkestis und Eurydike, auch schreiten einzeln ins imaginare: einem Raume zu, in dem sie 'auf unsäglichem Teppich' die Liebe unverlierbar konnen."

theme does not take on the personal quality of prophecy; it is submitted to the impersonal guidance of the classic story in order to allow the poet his attempt to shadow forth "other modes of being."[51]

"Orpheus. Eurydike. Hermes." came at the beginning of a period of objective discipline in Rilke's life, when he was living among works of art and trying to make poems to stand beside them, independent and free of the artistic treatment or its literary history. In a sense the poem we have been considering could not have been written later, certainly not in the wildly disturbed and rapturous period of the *Elegies*. *The Sonnets to Orpheus* carry the myth from its history into the theory of art. Although Orpheus now becomes the prime mover of the world, the poet-god, his story is nowhere retold in the *Sonnets;* he is no longer the Orpheus of the Thracian wilds. And Eurydice is long since translated into the "invisible" which calls out for reforming under the poet's song.

On the other hand, Miss Sitwell has passed through periods of great artistic performance, wit being one of the most characteristic modes, and has now arrived at "Eurydice," a strongly voiced affirmation, more comparable in tone to Rilke's sonnets than to his early poem. It is just because her past has been so splendid, so rare in modern English poetry, that we dare question the perfection of "Eurydice."

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[51] Cf. D. J. Enright, in *Scrutiny*, XV (1947), 76, who insists that Rilke is not a "platonist" and that he does not seek to symbolize his "personal feelings."

LA LEYENDA DE BÉCQUER *CREED EN DIOS* Y SU PRESUNTA FUENTE FRANCESA

MARÍA ROSA LIDA DE MALKIEL

LA BÚSQUEDA de las fuentes literarias requiere la consideración de circunstancias externas tales como el acuerdo cronológico y la probabilidad del contacto entre imitador e imitado. Asimismo requiere el estudio analítico de las obras en cuestión y su cotejo como organismos artísticos cabales, no equivalentes a la suma de los elementos en que se las puede desmenuzar. Pero no es raro descuidar este último requisito—en parte por exagerada aprensión a lo subjetivo—y perder así un medio eficaz de verificar el examen externo. El caso de la bien conocida Leyenda de Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer *Creed en Dios* y de la *Légende du beau Pécopin et de la belle Bauldour* de Victor Hugo (*Le Rhin*, "Lettre XXI") que, según A. Haggerty Krappe, es su indudable modelo,[1] puede servir de ejemplo.

Krappe nota que las fechas respectivas de *Le Rhin* y de las Leyendas hacen compatible el influjo; nota también circunstancias que estrechan la posibilidad del contacto: el tono sombrío de la Leyenda evoca el romanticismo macabro de Alemania e Inglaterra pero, como Bécquer no poseía alemán ni inglés, las producciones de estas lenguas, aparte lo vertido al español, sólo podían llegarle a través de reelaboraciones francesas. Después de resumir la Leyenda, Krappe la reduce a cuatro motivos:

(1) Sueño profético de la madre, lugar común del arte narrativo universal.

(2) Sacrilegio del héroe, apasionado cazador. Este motivo pertenece al ciclo muy difundido del Cazador maldito.[2] Como causa de su castigo eterno, se cuenta en el folklore alemán y escandinavo, no en el español, que en su entusiasmo por la caza, un malvado señor feudal atropella la misa.

(3) Cacería diabólica. Krappe recuerda que en el *Libro de los*

[1] A. Haggerty Krappe, "Sur une 'Légende' de Gustavo A. Bécquer (Creed en Dios)," *Neophilologus*, XVII (1932), 273-277.

[2] Además de la excelente bibliografía de Krappe, consúltese S. Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* (Indiana University Studies, XIX-XXIII, 1932-36), E 501: "The Wild Hunt." Agréguese la descolorida versión del *Caballero Cifar*, ed. C. P. Wagner (Ann Arbor, 1929), cap. 124, pág. 256, inspirada, según el editor, en las *Flores de filosofía* y *Bocados de oro*.

enxenplos de Clemente Sánchez de Vercial, impreso en 1857,[3] hay un lance semejante: en un acceso de ira, el rey Teodorico pide que se lo lleve el diablo; de inmediato aparece un caballero negro, jinete en un caballo negro, e invita al rey a montar; el rey lo hace y desaparece para siempre. Es dudoso que Bécquer, no versado en filología medieval, conociese el *Libro de los enxenplos* que, además, difiere de la Leyenda en un punto esencial: Teodorico se condena mientras Teobaldo de Montagut, protagonista de *Creed en Dios*, se salva.

(4) El héroe pierde todo sentido del tiempo transcurrido. Krappe se limita a observar que este último motivo falta en el cuento del *Libro de los enxenplos* y pasa al relato de Victor Hugo: Pécopin es, como Teobaldo, un señor feudal; es gran cazador, parte de sus aventuras se desarrolla en España, monta un caballo ofrecido por el diablo, y en su partida de caza galopa por los aires desde los Vosgos hasta el polo durante una noche que en realidad dura un siglo. El cuento de *Le Rhin*, concluye Krappe, ha sido el intermediario que brindó a Bécquer los motivos 3 y 4 ya que, por ignorar inglés y alemán, Bécquer no pudo recogerlos en los textos originales.

Con el debido respeto a la inmensa lectura y a la intuición muchas veces certera del ilustre investigador, no puedo adherirme a su terminante conclusión (pág. 277): "Point de doute que ce conte a été le modèle de la légende *Creed en Dios*." Ante todo, la reducción de la Leyenda a los cuatro motivos transcritos es inexacta e incompleta. Inexacta, porque en el relato de Bécquer el motivo 2 está disociado del ciclo del Cazador maldito por la sencilla razón de que Teobaldo de Montagut no corresponde a ese arquetipo. Teobaldo no profana la iglesia por su impaciente pasión por la caza[4] ni, en consecuencia, acaba

[3] "Enxemplo XLIII" en la edición de P. de Gayangos, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, LI, 457 y sig. Véase la bibliografía de Krappe sobre este cuento y sus relaciones con la *Thidreks Saga* y con la *Gesta Romanorum*, 190. En la *Queste del Saint Graal*, ed. Pauphilet (Paris, 1940), hay un curioso espisodio en que Perceval, desesperado por encontrarse sin caballo para proseguir una aventura, presta obediencia al diablo, quien le trae "un cheval grant et merveilleux, et si noir que ce iert merveiles a veoir" (pág. 92). Dicho lance está como preludiado por otro en el que también tiene importante papel "un grant destrier noir" (pág. 88), aunque no demoníaco.

[4] En su prisa por superponer al relato de Bécquer los motivos del folklore universal, Krappe no repara que el pecado de Teobaldo no es precisamente el que, según la explicación más difundida, expía el Cazador maldito, esto es, el de atropellar la fiesta o el culto de Dios (véase Thompson, *Motif-Index*, E 501.3.5, E 501.3.6 y E 501.3.8). Teobaldo no entra en la iglesia con intención sacrílega, sino para guarecerse de la lluvia. El sacerdote no le reprocha su conducta en ese momento, sino que en vista de su mala vida le aconseja hacer penitencia, lo que exaspera al Barón y le arranca la blasfemia que atrae sobre él el castigo del cielo, aunque no su condenación. En este sentido proporciona un paralelo más riguroso la historia algo compleja que M. O. Howey, *The Horse in Magic*

condenado para siempre a la cacería nocturna. Contra lo que expresamente afirma Krappe, pág. 274, en ninguna parte dice Bécquer que la caza fuese la pasión dominante de Teobaldo. Le pinta, sí, malvado e impío, como que el resorte del relato es la blasfemia "Yo no creo en Dios," tras la cual se desencadena vertiginosamente la acción: para su confusión el ateo es arrebatado hasta el trono de Dios, pero no se condena. El tono fuertemente ortodoxo y edificante elimina un visible castigo eterno como el de la estantigua, el de la "Maisnie Hellequin," y el de la cabalgata de desamoradas en el *Decamerone*, V, 8, en el *Lai du Trot*, en el *Clam d'amor* (ed. P. Meyer en *Romania*, XX, 1891, v. 538 y sigs., pág. 206 y sigs.). Tampoco es exacta la formulación del motivo 3. En la Leyenda, la cacería, desde el momento en que se oye gritar "¡Al jabalí!" hasta el momento en que Teobaldo hiere la fiera, no tiene nada de sobrenatural; ni siquiera se dice que la caza sea nocturna. Lo sobrenatural empieza con el negro caballo y el misterioso paje que le trae,[5] pero una vez que Teobaldo monta el mágico corcel, jabalí y cacería desaparecen por completo. En suma: en la Leyenda de Bécquer no existe el motivo de la caza diabólica.

La reducción a cuatro motivos es, además, incompleta porque inexplicablemente Krappe omite de su resumen de la Leyenda (pág. 274) así como de su enumeración de motivos (pág. 275) la visión ultraterrena de la que el tiempo abreviado no es más que un tradicional detalle accesorio.[6] Esto es: omite la culminación del relato, que determina el piadoso desenlace insinuado en el sueño profético del comienzo. Los motivos a que puede reducirse *Creed en Dios* serían, pues: (1) sueño profético de la madre; (2) el impío blasfema de Dios; (3)

and Myth (Londres, 1923), pág. 54 y sig., localiza en Rodenstein, Odenwald: un malvado Conde viola el domingo yendo de caza y hollando sembrados y tierras de labor; después de dos escenas de destrozo, llega a un bosque donde vive un ermitaño quien le reprocha sus abusos. El Conde levanta el látigo para azotar al ermitaño: en ese preciso momento comienza la cacería que acabará el Día del Juicio.

[5] El misterioso paje "delgado, muy delgado, y amarillo como la muerte" que sonríe de manera extraña cuando el Barón exclama que el cielo le ha enviado el caballo es, sin duda, diabólico y es, también sin duda, una concesión al gusto de la época aun a riesgo de romper la lógica interna de la narración. Pues, en efecto, lo lógico sería que el diabólico paje llevase al blasfemo a su perdición, no precisamente a una visita al cielo que le dejará arrepentido y edificado.

[6] Muy elocuente es la versión portuguesa de la leyenda de San Amaro, ed. O. Klob, *Romania*, XXX (1901), 517: cuando el protagonista cuenta que se ha ausentado sólo veinticinco días, y en realidad han transcurrido doscientos sesenta y siete años, un sabio sacerdote comprende al punto que San Amaro "esteuera aaporta de parayso terreal." Véanse Thompson, *Motif-Index*, F 377; E. S. Hartland, *The Science of Fairy Tales* (Londres, 1891), págs. 161-254, y H. R. Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), especialmente págs. 3, 31, 166, 232 y 245.

cacería; (4) caballo misterioso y galope sobrenatural; (5) visión ultraterrena y tiempo abreviado; (6) penitencia.

La tesis de Krappe gana verosimilitud merced a lo somero de su resumen del cuento de Victor Hugo, que acentúa desproporcionadamenta el parecido con el de Béquer. También es especiosa la observación de que de las muchas aventuras de Pécopin "une partie se déroule en Espagne," ya que, en rigor, Pécopin tiene en España una sola aventura o eslabón de aventura y ya que la observación sugiere una semejanza de ambiente entre esa aventura y la de Teobaldo. El cotejo imparcial de los dos relatos exige un sumario que no omita en la presunta fuente ninguno de sus principales motivos.

Pécopin, hijo del burgrave de Sonneck, y Bauldour, hija del señor de Falkenburg, él gran cazador, ella paciente hilandera, se aman tiernamente y están desposados. Érilangus, montero de Pécopin, comenta desfavorablemente el casamiento; su señor le despide. En vísperas de la boda, Pécopin se entrega a su deporte favorito; al pasar junto a cuatro árboles a la entrada del bosque, oye gorjear a cuatro pájaros: un anciano se ofrece a traducirle el gorjeo. Pécopin pasa de largo riendo y se encuentra con la partida de caza del Conde Palatino; durante tres días, hace tales proezas que el Conde le regala tierras y títulos; Pécopin ha de seguirle a su corte y escribe a su prometida que volverá al cabo de un mes. Entretanto, sueña que los cuatro pájaros comentan su dilación. El Conde, prendado del talento de su protegido, le envía de embajador al Duque de Borgoña, éste al Rey de Francia, éste al Miramamolín de España, éste al Califa de Bagdad. En Bagdad la sultana favorita se enamora del embajador y le regala su talismán: mientras lo lleve será joven; si está en peligro de muerte, tocarlo le salvará. El Califa, celoso, despeña a Pécopin quien, gracias al talismán, vuela por los aires y desciende a una playa solitaria. Aquí encuentra al diablo, el cual necesita su ayuda para cargar su espuerta de almas perdidas. Pécopin viene en ello, pero el diablo codicia también su alma y da orden a un diablillo de matar a su bienhechor. Pécopin lo advierte a tiempo; logra salvarse y librar a las almas, mientras el diablo queda jorobado y cojo. Después de aventuras varias e innumerables peregrinaciones por países reales e imaginarios, llega a los cinco años a los Vosgos y da consigo en el fatal "bois des pas perdus" del maligno enano Roulon. Cuando desespera de volver jamás a su amada, un anciano en suntuoso atavío de cazador, promete llevarle al castillo de Falkenburg si consiente en pasar una noche cazando con él. El físico del anciano cazador, su lenguaje, su enmascarado montero, el misterio de su magnífico séquito, jauría y caballos dan mala espina a Pécopin pero, como no ve otro medio de salir del bosque fatal, accede,

monta un hermoso rocín español y forma parte de una desatentada cabalgata tras un ciervo enorme. Los prodigios se suceden: se ven luces extrañas, el viento murmura los nombres de los lugares, vuelan aves traspasadas por flechas; los estribos sujetan como manos el pie del jinete que intenta desmontar; paisaje y clima cambian hasta llegar al polo, siempre en pos del ciervo que desaparece y reaparece. De repente, la partida se detiene ante un vasto edificio cuyas puertas se abren por sí solas al són del cuerno del anciano cazador. Pécopin recorre a caballo sus salas vacías y ricamente ornamentadas,[7] hasta llegar a una sala sostenida por infinitos pilares, donde se celebra un gran festín presidido por Nemrod; los convidados—cazadores célebres de la mitología y la historia—y sus servidores aguardan, rodeados de una muchedumbre de espectadores a caballo, como Pécopin. Doscientos lacayos aparecen trayendo al ciervo en una enorme bandeja. Pero empieza a clarear y pronto canta el gallo; todo se desvanece. Pécopin se encuentra en un bosque, cerca del castillo de Falkenburg. Allí topa con el diablo, en su figura de viejo cazador, y con su montero Érilangus que es quien ha revelado al diablo la pasión de Pécopin por la caza. El diablo se jacta de haber cumplido su palabra y asegura al joven que Bauldour le ama y aguarda. Al acercarse al castillo, Pécopin nota algunos cambios. En el cuarto de su amada hila una vieja horrible quien, cerciorada de su identidad, le echa los brazos al cuello, pues no es otra que Bauldour ya que, por venganza del diablo, la caza ha durado cien años. Pécopin huye desesperado, arroja sus ropas, presente del diablo, al torrente de Sonneck y se mesa los cabellos; con indecible horror nota que tiene el pelo blanco, las manos rugosas y que le faltan las fuerzas: es que, en su desesperación, ha arrojado también el talismán de la sultana. Se arrastra hasta el castillo, en cuyo tejado gorjean cuatro pájaros. Pécopin recuerda su sueño y presta atención; ahora entiende el coloquio, que subraya la moraleja de su historia: "Tel qui part pour un an croit partir pour un jour."

Ya se echa de ver, aun omitiendo innumerables pormenores que aspiran a ser pintorescos y muchísimas tentativas de chiste, que el

[7] Con escenas de mitología e historia, como es frecuente en los Castillos de la Fama, Amor y Fortuna de la poesía medieval y renacentista: cf. Jean de Meung, *Roman de la Rose*; Robert Grosseteste, *Chasteau d'Amour*; Nicole de Margival, *Panthère d'Amours*; Boccaccio, *Amorosa Visione*; Frederico Frezzi, *Quadrireggio*; Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*; Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata*; Chaucer, *House of Fame*; Lydgate, *Temple of Glass*; Gavin Douglas, *Palice of Honour*; Juan del Encina, *Triunfo de Fama* y *Triunfo de Amor*; Alonso de Ercilla, *La Araucana*; Juan de Miramontes Zuázola, *Armas antárticas*; Luis Barahona de Soto, *Lágrimas de Angélica*; Lope de Vega, *La Arcadia* y *Hermosura de Angélica*; Bernardo de Balbuena, *Bernardo*; cf. también Baltasar Gracián, *El criticón*.

cuento de Victor Hugo es notablemente más extenso, más complicado y más rico en epsodios que la escueta Leyenda de Bécquer. Pero hay una diferencia esencial más importante todavía: Bécquer escribe con unción devota; Victor Hugo echa a broma su asunto. En efecto: en la carta que sigue al índice de capítulos, Hugo declara que, pues se le pide un cuento de la Alemania romántica, va de cuento, e insiste en que es pura invención. Escribiendo en esa vena, es natural que Victor Hugo no se proponga edificar a sus lectores ni documentarles sobre el folklore renano, sino entretenerles con un cuento jocoso y galante, armado sobre un pintoresco escenario germano-medieval con aditamento de cuanta hojarasca decorativa se le ofrezca. Ese intento determina la selección de motivos tradicionales, imprime en éstos importantes desvíos de su sentido corriente y hasta trasluce en el título (que se parece bastante más a los de *Las mil y una noches* que a los de la Europa medieval) y en el nombre del protagonista.

Un caso particular del motivo del tiempo abreviado es la frecuente conseja del devoto que no puede creer en tal o cual atributo de Dios: Onías según el Talmud, un personaje anónimo según el Corán, Esdras y Jeremías según leyendas sirias y árabes, dudan de que Dios pueda restaurar la asolada Jerusalén, pero al despertar la hallan reconstruída, pues su sueño ha durado setenta años o un siglo. Un monje sale al vergel del convento caviloso por haber leído en el Salmo XC, 4: "Quoniam mille anni ante oculos tuos tamquam dies hesterna" (o textos semejantes); queda embebecido oyendo el canto de un pájaro y al volver al convento lo halla todo cambiado: han transcurrido cien años.[8] Sólo que como la teología no es materia de regocijo, Victor

[8] Para la leyenda de Onías y de Ezra (Jeremías) y otras semejantes, creadas probablemente para glosar el Salmo CXXVI, 1, véase M. Huber, *Die Wanderlegende von den Siebenschläfern* (Leipzig, 1910), pág. 403 y sigs.; para la leyenda del monje y el pájaro, véanse Hartland, *The Science*, pág. 187 y sigs., y Thompson, *Motif-Index*, D 2011.1. Como el primero de estos autores registra un solo ejemplo hispánico y el segundo ninguno, menciono los siguientes: la *Cantiga CIII* de Alfonso el Sabio, muy interesante por su temprana fecha y porque suprime la duda teológica y aumenta el lapso transcurrido; el P. Isla, en el *Día grande de Navarra*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, XV, 10, informa que la historia se daba por sucedida en el monasterio navarro de San Salvador de Leyre, mientras según R. Southey se la asociaba con el convento gallego de San Salvador de Villar (Hartland, *The Science*, pág. 187) y según Teófilo Braga, con el convento portugúes de Villar de Frades (*Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ed. del Marqués de Valmar, Madrid, 1889, I, xlix); hoy se atribuye también a San Pascual Bailón; cf. A. Reyes, *Obra poética* (México, 1952), pág. 325 y sigs. La preciosa conseja del monje y el pájaro parece cruce entre la tradución talmúdica, que se sirve del motivo del tiempo abreviado para demostrar la omnipotencia de Dios, y de la tradición céltica, que lo usa sencillamente para encarecer el canto de pájaros sobrenaturales como los de Rhiannon y los cisnes hijos de Ler en el *Mabinogion* y como el que solaza al abad Mochoe con tres melodías, cada una de las cuales dura cincuenta años. (C. Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, Oxford, 1909, clxxxvi). Hay muchos otros tipos de cuentos que desarrollan el motivo del

Hugo ha elegido, en lugar del devoto o del monje, un galán enamorado a quien el diablo detiene un siglo por haberse entregado una noche a su deporte favorito. La conseja teológica (muy particularmente la del Talmud) suele subrayar la tragedia del incrédulo que, merced a su singular experiencia, gana la fe pero vuelve al mundo a hallarse solitario en medio de una generación que no es la suya. Victor Hugo ha permitido que la persona más importante para Pécopin le aguarde y reconozca y ame, pero la misma constancia de la enamorada de ciento vienticinco años—sin talismán rejuvenecedor—acentúa la deformación grotesca del desenlace. La conseja teológica se propone ilustrar la omnipotencia de Dios, que rebasa la especulación humana. El cuento risueño de Victor Hugo encierra una lección galante: nada de demoras en la caza del "doux oiseau d'amour."

Traspuesto así el tono del relato, surgía una dificultad de composición: ¿cómo poner al gentil caballero de Sonneck en contacto con la esfera de trasmundo a la cual pertenece el motivo del tiempo abreviado? Pécopin, enamorado y cazador, equidista de la cavilación teológica del religioso y de la blasfemia del sacrílego. Por eso el autor francés ha tenido que valerse de la enredada aventura en que su héroe irrita al diablo (cap. VI) y éste, en venganza, le invita a su cacería de una noche que durará un siglo. Aun así, la motivación es precaria. Teológica y artísticamente, sería de esperar que Pécopin se lanzase a la cacería diabólica con libre albedrío, movido por su pasión de cazador que el diablo conoce gracias al despechado Érilangus. Pero no hay tal: Pécopin desea, por sobre todas las cosas, reunirse con su prometida y, para no dejarle alternativa, Victor Hugo se ha traído a colación el *deus ex machina* del bosque encantado y el enano Roulon.[9] Por último,

tiempo abreviado: a la bibliografía de Thompson, F 377, puede agregarse una reelaboración literaria española: *Sancho Gil* de Gaspar Núñez de Arce (1878). La visión circunstanciada del Paraíso aparece en el cuento bretón del mozo que va a entregar una carta a Dios; en el cuento islandés en que un forastero reprende a un mal sacerdote y le muestra el cielo y el infierno: de vuelta a la tierra, el cepador cae en la cuenta de que han pasado siete años y que otro sacerdote ocupa su puesto (Hartland, *The Science*, págs. 190 y sig., 193 y sig.); en la leyenda de San Amaro, popular hasta hoy en España y Portugal: véanse "Conto de Amaro," ed. O. Klob, *Romania*, XXX (1901), 504-518, y M. Asín Palacios, *La escatología musulmana en la "Divina comedia"* (seg. ed., Madrid-Granada, 1943), pág. 331.

[9] Una falla más grave en la estructura del cuento es que hay en él no una sino dos cacerías que se alargan sin que el protagonista haya podido preveerlo; cualquiera de las dos hubiera bastado para ilustrar la tesis del cuento, al que perjudican por su redundancia y por su enlace artificioso. Pues bastaba la cacería que emprende Pécopin la semana de sus bodas con las subsiguientes misiones diplomáticas y los cinco años de correrías para hacer flaquear la fidelidad de Bauldour y castigar así el celo excesivo del cazador. Pero Victor Hugo no tuvo fuerzas para renunciar a las posibilidades fantásticas del motivo de la caza diabólica, que constituye la segunda parte de su relato, ni para renunciar a las

vale la pena señalar que en el cuento de Victor Hugo es el diablo quien gana la partida, lo que de ningún modo cuadra al relato popular y contrasta rotundamente con la conseja piadosa del devoto y el tiempo abreviado, pero sí refuerza la intención cómica del relato.

El tono de *Creed en Dios* es diametralmente opuesto. En todas sus Leyendas, Bécquer muestra grave simpatía por sus asuntos, trata lo sobrenatural—divino o demoníaco—con poética reverencia y se complace en exaltar los santuarios locales: el impío halla en el Paraíso a Nuestra Señora de Montserrat; el pastor se salva cuando en la cueva de los gnomos cae de hinojos al oír las campanas de Nuestra Señora del Moncayo (*El gnomo*). El ambiente medieval confiere brillo decorativo e impulso pasional a varias Leyendas; más que en ninguna es importante el medievalismo en *Creed en Dios*, pues afecta a su forma misma: la invocación pausada y con repetición lírica, la división en capítulos breves y parejos, como si fueran prosificación de estancias, el apóstrofe intercalado al auditorio, todo quiere sugerir formas poéticas de antaño y en especial la "cantiga provenzal" del subtítulo. Ni por asomo se halla la ligereza y zumba que colora la narración inserta en *Le Rhin*.

La gravedad de la inspiracion ya está patente en el título, *Creed en Dios* que, por añadidura, se da como la inscripción funeraria del protagonista y se refuerza con el solemne epígrafe en que el pecador confundido se dirige desde el otro mundo al caminante. El nombre del héroe, altisonante en extremo—Teobaldo de Montagut, barón de Fortcastell—da la justa tónica del relato. El origen del personaje está aureolado con ciertos visos de santidad: su padre muere "peleando como bueno contra los enemigos de Dios"; su madre tiene un sueño premonitorio de la maldad y la salvación de su hijo que preludia el contenido entero del relato y demuestra qué notable partido sacó el artista de tan trillado motivo. Teobaldo no es hombre de andar en tiernos amores ni demuestra particular afición al deporte, al fin inocente, de la caza.

La Leyenda posee fuerte unidad; no hay episodios ociosos introducidos por puro amor a lo pintoresco; no hay, de hecho, más personajes que el feroz Barón, salvo ocasionales interlocutores para articular el relato (el sacerdote que con su reprimenda provoca la blasfemia, el paje diabólico que trae el caballo, la vieja que le rechaza impaciente, el monje

aventuras exóticas de la primera. El magnate que en la boda abandona a la novia, visita el cielo por un instante que equivale a muchos años y al volver halla en lugar de su palacio un monasterio, es un motivo folklórico conocido que, según Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, pág. 395, se remonta en última instancia a la leyenda de San Alejo: véanse R. Köhler, *Kleinere Schriften* (Berlín, 1900), II, 224 y sigs., y Asín Palacios, *La escatología*, pág. 330. Quizá lo tuviera presente Victor Hugo al dilatar las bodas de Pécopin y Bauldour.

que le explica lo sucedido), aunque muy hábilmente se bosquejan como telón humano, la licenciosa comitiva, los lugareños aterrados al principio y rudos al final. En lugar de aventuras amorosas, de andanzas por las cortes de Europa y los reinos de Oriente, de la cabalgata por todas las latitudes, Bécquer encarece mediante cierta abstracta sobriedad el galope del caballo misterioso, de la tierra al cielo, con veloz sucesión de paisaje, sin recurrir a enumeración copiosa ni a descripción detallada. En lugar de la fantástica pintura de un infierno especialmente destinado a cazadores empedernidos, Bécquer despliega la visión del cielo embellecida con rico lirismo, pero objetivamente muy fiel a la concepción cristiana tradicional (salvo la "región adonde van todos los acentos de la Tierra," plegarias y blasfemias, entre las cuales Teobaldo oye claramente la suya). En lugar del irónico desenlace que deja triunfante al diablo, se cumple aquí armoniosamente el designio de la Providencia que desea la enmienda y no el aniquilamiento del pecador. En suma: tono, ideal artístico, técnica de la narración, estilo son del todo opuestos en ambos relatos, lo que hace inadmisible considerar el cuento de Victor Hugo como modelo de *Creed en Dios*. Más aún: es lógico presumir que Bécquer sintiese natural antipatía a un relato irreverente y liviano en su actitud ante la Edad Media y ante lo sobrenatural, y estaría muy poco dispuesto a buscar en él recursos literarios. En otros términos: sólo en el caso de que los motivos comunes a las dos narraciones sean muy semejantes, y de que Bécquer los haya podido encontrar exclusivamente en el cuento francés puede argüirse que, pese a la honda diferencia, aquél, aunque en forma muy limitada, presidió a la creación de *Creed en Dios*.

Ahora bien: ¿cuáles son los elementos comunes? Ya hemos visto que, estrictamente, se reducen a dos—cabalgadura sobrenatural y tiempo abreviado—y que el empleo y circunstancias de ambos en los dos cuentos son tan distintos que antes excluyen que implican influjo del uno en el otro. Pécopin, pasmado ante el magnífico séquito del anciano cazador, requiere la correspondiente jauría: mágicamente aparece la magnífica jauría; Pécopin repite pareja observación sobre los caballos: mágicamente aparecen magníficos caballos, y los picadores presentan dos, negros como el ébano, a su señor y a su invitado; éste elige un "beau genet d'Espagne" que se lanza a una carrera sobrenatural. Nótese que el caballo no aparece, precisamente, por especial pedido del protagonista y que todos los compañeros de cacería disponen de análoga cabalgadura y en ella asisten a la cena presidida por Nemrod; que el don del caballo precede a la cacería, y que, en fin, el caballo pierde bríos cuando comienza a rayar el día y se desvanece, junto con toda la visión infernal, al canto del gallo. En la Leyenda es Teobaldo quien pide

el caballo con toda la vehemencia de quien está por dar alcance a la codiciada presa y cuando, perdida toda esperanza, decide continuar a pie la persecución, surge de la espesura el extraño paje trayendo de la brida al "corcel negro como la noche" exclusivamente destinado para él. Con ironía trágica—indicada por la sonrisa del paje—el impío murmura maquinalmente, "El Cielo me lo envía," sin sospechar la verdad de sus palabras. Desde el primer momento el caballo muestra su mágica condición ("relinchó con una fuerza que hizo estremecer el bosque; dió un bote increíble") y cuando tras "fantástica carrera" Teobaldo deja "de percibir el ruído que producían los cascos . . . al herir la tierra," echa al olvido cacería y jabalí, pues advierte estremecido que es "el juguete de un poder sobrenatural" y con nueva unción recorre los cielos. Así, a diferencia del relato francés, el caballo viene en busca del héroe y sólo del héroe, como agente de su personal castigo y redención, y su presencia pone fin a la cacería. Discretamente, Bécquer prefiere olvidarlo en cuanto el Barón llega al cielo, donde sería grotesca la figura de un visitante a horcajadas.

En cuanto al tiempo, cinco años muy normales transcurren en la primera parte de las andanzas de Pécopin y una noche de cien años en la segunda. Bécquer deja intencionadamente vago ("cosa de ciento a ciento veinte años") el lapso que media entre el momento en que Teobaldo monta el negro corcel y el momento en que despierta en el mismo lugar, circunstancia, claro está, que enlaza la aventura del Barón sacrílego con el motivo del durmiente, tan vetusto como difundido, y muchas veces asociado con iniciación religiosa durante el sueño.[10] Sólo al acercarse al castillo de Falkenburg y una vez en él nota Pécopin algunos cambios, mientras Teobaldo desde el primer momento es ásperamente rechazado por los aldeanos y luego se percata en su castillo del cambio—ruinas, himnos—que sella su trágica soledad.

Los dos motivos que la Leyenda de Bécquer comparte con la de Hugo distan, pues, de ser muy semejantes. Pero ¿son privativos de ésta a tal punto que Bécquer no pudo tomarlos sino de allí? La repuesta es forzosamente negativa. En primer término, si el español presenta el motivo del impío que atropella la iglesia, motivo nórdico ausente en su supuesta fuente, quiere decir que disponía de otras fuentes que

[10] Así en una de sus formas más antiguas, la de Epiménides de Creta, quien entró de niño en una cueva mientras sus ovejas sesteaban, durmió cincuenta y siete años y despertó creyendo haber descansado pocas horas. Epiménides fué luego acatado en toda Grecia por su sabiduría en materia de culto y ceremonias rituales. Máximo de Tiro afirma que durante su sueño platicó con los dioses y recibió de ellos instrucción religiosa: véanse H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (quinta ed., Berlín, 1943), I, 27 y sigs., y Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, pág. 387 y sigs.

Victor Hugo y que pudo reflejar el tono sombrío de las leyendas románticas alemanas e inglesas a través de versiones españolas o francesas sin reducirse a *Le Rhin*, amén de que mal podía transmitirle ese tono la chistosa historia de los amores de Pécopin. En segundo término, los motivos del caballo sobrenatural y del tiempo abreviado no tienen nada de peculiarmente nórdico o anglogermánico por una parte, ni nada de exclusivamente victorhuguesco por la otra. Sin salir de la Península, la tradición oral (que Bécquer utilizó para sus Leyendas, según declaración expresa de Krappe, pág. 273) le brindaba para el tiempo abreviado la historia de los Siete durmientes, la de San Amaro, visitante del Paraíso, y la del monje de Leyre o de San Salvador de Villar o de Villar de Frades, suspenso por el canto del pájaro paradisíaco, mientras la literatura reciente le aportaba la historia de Rip Van Winkle, traducida al castellano desde 1829.[11] Para el caballo misterioso y su galope sobrenatural, la *Hermosura de Angélica*, XIV, 77 y sigs. y XVI, 78, de Lope de Vega ofrecía un modelo notable;[12] pero el antecedente más digno de atención es sin duda la *Leyenda de Al-Hamar* de José Zorrilla (*Granada*, 1852), tan popular por los años de Bécquer, la cual se vale también del galope milagroso para otorgar a su héroe una minuciosa visión escatológica. Vale la pena señalar que la combinación de estos dos motivos no es corriente (no la registra el Índice de Thompson) y probablemente sea hallazgo de Zorrilla, cuyo poema, por su devoción y por la simpatía con que trata el mundo morisco, particularmente caro al arte romántico, debía de atraer a Bécquer más que la descreída historia de Victor Hugo. A decir verdad, sin embargo, no creo que Bécquer escogiese ninguna de las tradiciones de las obras indicadas, ni aun la de Zorrilla, que reúne el maximo de condiciones a su favor, como modelo deliberado o como fuente única de los motivos

[11] S. T. Williams, "The First Version of the Writings of Washington Irving in Spanish," *Modern Philology*, XXVIII (1930), 186.

[12] Descarto el *Caballero Cifar*, pág. 478 y sigs., que difícilmente conociera Bécquer, así como por idéntica razón he descartado para el motivo del tiempo abreviado la *Cantiga CIII* de Alfonso el Sabio. Pero no excluyo la posibilidad de que Bécquer tuviese presente la "Historia del caballo encantado" de las *Mil y una noches*, que también parece haber rondado la imaginación de Victor Hugo. En esa historia, el príncipe persa refiere a la princesa bengalí que, al montar el caballo mágico, fué arrebatado por los aires "d'une vitesse beaucoup plus grande que d'une flèche décochée par l'archer le plus robuste et le plus expérimenté" (cito según la traducción de Jean Antoine Galland, de donde derivan todas las versiones europeas hasta bien avanzado el siglo XIX). Victor Hugo, en su cap. XI, escribe que cuando los monteros desatan la cuadrilla, "les chiens lâchés partirent comme la poignée de pierre que lance la baliste." Y en la Leyenda española, cuando el caballo sobrenatural salta a "más de diez varas del suelo," el aire comienza "a zumbar en los oídos del jinete como zumba una piedra arrojada por la honda." La diversidad de las armas empleadas en la imagen y la de sus correlatos marca lo vago e independiente del recuerdo en los dos autores modernos.

del caballo y del tiempo abreviado, antes bien me inclino a creer que estructuró libremente para su "cantiga provenzal" el recuerdo de los elementos hallados en estas y sin duda en otras tradiciones y lecturas. Lo que urge destacar es que la obrilla de Victor Hugo, además de no ser nada exclusiva en cuanto a los dos motivos que comparte con la Leyenda, como un todo artístico está muy alejada de ella, lo cual hace la hipótesis de Krappe, sobre ociosa, inverosímil.

La falla de A. Haggerty Krappe se explica no tanto por la precipitación de que adolece su nota (patente en los inexactos sumarios de los cuentos) como por haber sacrificado lo más obvio—la impresión artística total de cada relato—a la seducción de un aparente rigor científico—reducción de la Leyenda a motivos conocidos del cuento folklórico universal—falseando, como consecuencia de su desatención a la obra artística en conjunto, la identificación de sus motivos particulares. En el capítulo VII de la *Poética*, Aristóteles requiere de la fábula trágica que sea fácilmente abarcable por la memoria, así como el objeto o el ser hermoso lo son por la vista. El discreto requisito tiene dos caras, y la que concierne al crítico exige, no menos justificadamente, que la visión de conjunto de la obra de arte presida a cada paso de su investigación analítica.

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BLAKE'S EARLY SWEDENBORGIANISM: A TWENTIETH-CENTURY LEGEND

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BLAKE biography is still in a prescientific state, and nothing in it is more confused than the treatment of the extent and date of Blake's contact with the writings and disciples of Emmanuel Swedenborg. The question itself is of rather specialized interest; but the genealogy and morphology of the confusion should prove edifying to scholars and biographers generally.

Originating in the present century, the legend that Blake's boyhood was steeped in Swedenborgianism flourishes at present as a categorical statement even in texts where supporting evidence has been cut away. The same biographers who tell us that Blake's father and brothers were active Swedenborgians and that Blake until his thirtieth year remained entirely within the limits of Swedenborgian "anti-intellectualism" observe, somewhat inconsistently, that the process of translating Swedenborg's works was slow, one of the earliest translations being *Heaven and Hell* in 1778 (when Blake was twenty-one), and that the first London New Church was formed in 1787 (when Blake's father and brother Robert were both dead). The only documentary evidence cited to link Blake with London Swedenborgians belongs to his thirty-first year (1789), and only his works of that or later periods are cited as making direct allusion to Swedenborg and revealing dependence on such Swedenborgian concepts as the idea of correspondence. In view of this later unmistakable and considerable dependence, it would seem significant that nothing markedly Swedenborgian has been found in the work of Blake's youth. Yet we are assured that he was "born into" a family of Swedenborgians and had "a boyhood steeped in New Church discussion."[1]

Most specifically we are told that Blake's father possessed a set of *Arcana Caelestia, Divine Love and Wisdom,* and *Apocalypse Revealed.* And here the very consolidation of error, in illustration of a principle Blake was fond of, supplies its own refutation.

I think we may safely assume that none of the Blake family read these works in their original Latin. Yet the first considerable English translation of the *Arcana* (a work of some 8,000 pages) only began to

[1] A rare exception is the rejection of this legend by the Rev. Mr. J. G. Davies, *The Theology of William Blake* (Oxford, 1948), in his chapters, "Blake and the Church" and "Blake and Swedenborg."

be published in 1784, the year of Blake's father's death, its twelfth volume coming along in 1806. And it was William Blake, not his father, who owned and penciled the margins of the first English translations of *Divine Love and Wisdom* (1788), *Divine Providence* (1790), and probably, though Blake's copy is now lost, *Apocalypse Revealed* (1791).[2] None of these volumes could have been on James Blake's bookshelf.[3]

It is possible to observe how this legend grew. Alexander Gilchrist, Blake's Carlylean biographer, for once is not to blame. He said only that James Blake (Junior not Senior) "would at times *talk Swedenborg*, talk of seeing Abraham and Moses," which is not improbable for the later part of James' life, when he was "vegetating" near Linnell and his gifted brother was talking Swedenborg to Crabb Robinson and drawing visionary portraits for Varley.[4]

This "talk" was pushed back into Blake's boyhood for the first time, so far as I can discover, in 1907 by two Blake biographers who may have consulted each other. Pierre Berger, seeking the origin of Blake's "mystical and religious beliefs," speculated that it would "perhaps" be right to trace these to Swedenborgianism in his father, the existence of which he thereupon took to be a "fact." Berger evoked a family scene in which the elder James joined the younger James, with William "listening to many conversations about Swedenborg and the New Church, with which his father and his brother James were a good deal in sympathy, and probably drawing childish pictures for his amusement."[5]

At the same time, or earlier, Edwin J. Ellis, in that eccentric and highly intuitive volume entitled *The Real Blake: A Portrait Biography* (1907, prepared for the press in 1904), working rather apparently from Gilchrist's bare remark about James Junior, not only stated that Blake "had been accustomed at home to hear Swedenborgian talk," but supplied the Blake family with a library of Swedenborgian volumes which, as we have seen, had not yet been printed. Knowing of the existence of Blake's annotated copies of *Divine Love* and *Apocalypse*

[2] See James Hyde, *A Bibliography of the Works of Swedenborg* (London, 1906), and William T. Lowndes, *The Bibliographer's Manual* (London, 1864), V, 2553-4. Blake's marginalia are available in most modern editions of his works.

[3] One exception must be noted. Parts of the second volume of the *Arcana* were translated and published in 1750 in London at the author's expense (Hyde, p. 139). But we shall see how completely factitious is the insertion of the *Arcana* in the list.

[4] Gilchrist, *Life of Blake*, ed. Ruthven Todd (London, 1942; orig. ed., 1863), p. 48. James Blake, Junior lived until about 1824.

[5] Berger, *Blake: Mysticisme et poésie* (Paris, 1907); tr. by Daniel H. Conner (London, 1914), pp. 53, 24.

Revealed, but unaware of the late dates on their title pages, Ellis pronounced that these two books and another "seem all to have been owned by Blake's father." What is his explanation of this seeming? At the time of the father's death "when the inheritance was divided," Ellis reasoned, "no one can possibly believe that most of the books did not come to William." Actually we have no record of *any* books. Ellis further intuited that William Blake did not find time to read the inherited volumes until after Robert's death, in 1787.[6] Here, perhaps in its pristine form, the legend gaves Blake a shelf of books which he does *not* read—as legends grow, a version not so far as it might seem from the tale that he was steeped in them.

A few years later a modern Swedenborgian, H. N. Morris, delivered before the London Blake Society a scholarly address on "Blake and Swedenborg," subsequently printed in *The Quest* of October 1919. Morris reiterated the formula of the elder Blake's Swedenborgianism, which Ellis and Berger had now made available, and proceeded to define rather liberally those qualities of Blake's Christianity which he considered similar to New Church doctrine. Morris gently chided Ellis (without naming any names) as one of several biographers of Blake who had "not shown the intimate knowledge of Swedenborg . . . required in order to understand Blake."

Ellis had headed his list of the books owned by James Blake, Senior with the title of that impressive twelve-volume work, the *Arcana Caelestia*. He had found a set (he tells us) "nicely bound in slate-coloured boards" in "a good English translation" at the offices of the modern Swedenborg Society. Unable to resist this addition to his *Portrait Biography*, he priced the work, measured it, and thumbed through its index, coming to the mistaken conclusion that it was a "Symbolic Dictionary of the Bible." Morris now corrected *this* error and added that there was "no evidence" that Blake had ever studied the *Arcana*. "We do know that he studied and admired . . . *The Universal Theology or True Christian Religion*," Morris added, citing Blake's reference to this work in his *Descriptive Catalogue* of 1809, in which he speaks respectfully of Swedenborg as a "visionary" whose works "are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets" as "foundations for grand things." Morris was aware also of the existence of Swedenborgian works annotated by Blake but now partly lost; but their publication dates all fail to substantiate the Ellis-Berger legend.[7]

[6] Ellis, *The Real Blake* (New York, 1907), p. 23.

[7] Morris, "Blake and Swedenborg," *The Quest* (Oct. 1919), p. 80: "We know that there were in existence a few years ago copies of Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Wisdom, Heaven and Hell*, and *Apocalypse Revealed* with Blake's marginal annotations; and that one of the pictures exhibited at the Burlington House Blake Exhibition [1876] had a marginal note in Blake's hand-

In the "standard" biographies of the next decade—the *Life* by Mona Wilson (1927) and the *Life* by Thomas Wright, secretary of the London Blake Society (1929)—the behavior of James Blake, Junior becomes firmly established as the early Swedenborgianism and "imaginativeness" of James Senior. Ten years later the legend is still expanding. In an article of 1938 Mr. Schorer transfers the Swedenborgianism of James to Robert, a more sympathetic brother, and speaks of it as an active association with a Community.[8] Miss Margaret Lowery in her *Windows of the Morning* (1940), unaware that Morris was questioning, not affirming, cites him as authority for the statement that Blake's father owned *Divine Love, Apocalypse Revealed*, and the *Arcana*.

Now fully matured, the legend is of course given a place of honor by everyone telling the story of Blake's boyhood. Attractive fabulation has triumphed and has buttressed itself with authoritative evidence. Scholars who will not touch with a ten-foot pole what Wright calls the "lumber" of Ellis have permitted him to embarrass them with a ten-foot shelf of the *Arcana*.

For a more pious legend of Blakean Swedenborgianism we have to thank H. N. Morris himself, who had an imaginative as well as a scholarly side. In his *Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge, and Other Men of Genius Influenced by Swedenborg* (1915), written "for children" and perhaps not intended to be examined too closely by adults,[9] Morris considers it "probable" that Blake at fourteen "often met or walked beside the great Emmanuel Swedenborg, then an old man of eighty-four" —on the strength of the fact that the seer, though he could not carry on a conversation in English, spent the last half year of his life in London. An early anthologist of Blake had observed that Blake and the sage whose works he would *later* read *might* in 1771 have met "unwittingly" in the streets of London.[10] Morris believes it "certain" that Blake "was from a child familiar with the writings" and that his father and brother James both were members of the New Jerusalem

writing recommending the public to read Swedenborg's *Worship and Love of God*." Blake's copies of *Divine Love* and (unknown to or unmentioned by Berger, Ellis, or Morris) *Divine Providence* are the translations of 1788 and 1790. The other copies mentioned are now lost. The *Apocalypse Revealed* must have been the translation of 1789; the *Heaven and Hell* (to which Blake's work of 1790 seems to be a fresh response) was more probably that of 1789 than the earlier translation of 1778.

[8] Mark Schorer, "Swedenborg and Blake," *MP*, XXXVI (1938), 157-158; also *William Blake: The Politics of Vision* (New York, 1946), p. 104.

[9] These essays first appeared serially in the *New-Church Young People's Magazine* in 1909 and 1910, according to a notice in the Boston *New-Church Review*, XXII (1915), 313.

[10] William Allingham, in *Nightingale Valley* (1860), quoted by Gilchrist.

Church in Hatton Garden and that "one at least of the 'Songs of Innocence' was written by William Blake in that Church."

I think no biographer has attempted to transplant the delicate vision of young Blake and old Swedenborg walking the London streets hand in hand, though I can imagine it flourishing nicely as a caption for Plate 84 of *Jerusalem*. And it is reported that Swedenborg gave gingerbread to the children in front of his house.

The anecdote of Blake's composing a song of innocence in the Hatton Garden Temple (his father's church) is becoming a biographers' favorite. True, the Hatton Garden Temple was not built until 1797. James Blake, thirteen years dead, must have attended somewhat insubstantially. But nothing is strange in a good Blake biography. All one has to do is push the date of the *Songs of Innocence* from 1789 to 1799, as Morris does by a flick of the memory when he elaborates the anecdote with scholarly documentation for the Blake Society. In 1789 Blake attended a conference of Swedenborgians.

> It was eight years later that a new place of worship was built and opened in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, and we have it on the authority of C. A. Tulk, then Member of Parliament for Poole... that Blake's poem on the Divine Image—beginning with the words "To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love"—was composed by him whilst sitting in the Hatton Garden Church. He was therefore a frequenter of that Church up to the year 1799.[11]

The year 1799 is Morris's false date for the *Songs of Innocence*. Failure to note this decade of error afflicted not only the listening members of the London Blake Society but subsequently Miss Lowery and Mr. Schorer, who quietly passed the story on to us as based "on respectable evidence," though of course they returned to the correct date (1789) for the *Songs*.

What about the "authority of C. A. Tulk, then Member of Parliament for Poole"? He did own a copy of *Songs of Innocence & Experience*, as well as a copy of *Poetical Sketches* inscribed "To Charles Tulk, Esq.—from William Blake." He was involved with Flaxman in 1810 in the work of a committee raising funds to publish Swedenborg, and Miss Lowery reasons thus:

> C. A. Tulk would, of course, have had authentic information because he must have been personally acquainted with Blake in their association together in the New Church at the time that Blake and his wife became members, April 13, 1789.[12]

It is not quite true that the Blakes "became members" in 1789; but Tulk was indeed a member of Parliament for Poole—in 1835-37, however, for in 1789 he was only three years old. According to a memoir which

[11] Morris, *loc. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

[12] Margaret R. Lowery, *Windows of the Morning* (New Haven, 1940), p. 14.

may be Morris's source, what C. A. Tulk did "then" (in 1838) was to lend someone his copy of Blake's *Songs*. Did he then tell some such story? The printed memoir, at least, does not say.[13]

Two questions remain. What kind of sectarian faith, if any, ***was*** Blake's boyhood steeped in? And what were the date and the degree of Blake's adult association with London Swedenborgians? Few have taken seriously the hoax—or rumor—accepted by Ellis (and Yeats) that Blake was a red-headed Irish Catholic named O'Neil, without knowing it. H. M. Margoliouth has definitely scotched that notion.[14] Or so I had thought. But Miss Elizabeth O'Higgins is now publishing in the *Dublin Magazine* some excerpts from a work in progress in which she takes it for granted that William Blake was Shane O'Neil, ***not*** without knowing it—a recognizable development. This would, of course, steep Blake's (or O'Neil's) boyhood in Irish folklore. Of one fabulous Irish source Miss O'Higgins announces: "We do not know *yet* whether Blake heard the story from his father."[15] Biography abhors a vacuum. We can see a great future opening in the word "yet."

On a more likely course, Miss Lowery has examined admittedly "slender" evidence that Blake's parents may have attended a Moravian chapel (somebody name Blake ***did***), only to rush on to say: "Which group he [Blake's father] favored matters less than the fact that his association with some group was active and sincere"—a "fact" that scarcely follows! The plainer fact, only recently discovered, that Blake's parents were married in St. George's Chapel, May Fair—a method notoriously quick, quiet, and cheap—does not suggest ardent sectaries of any sort.[16]

Rejecting speculation about Blake's father, who is really a person quite unknown, we must for the present rest content with the statement of Henry Crabb Robinson in his essay of 1810 defining the poet's faith as a "combination of Religion and love of Art" and affirming, apparently after conversation with James Blake, Junior:

> Blake does not belong by birth to the established church, but to a dissenting sect; although we do not believe that he goes regularly to any Christian Church. He was invited to join the Swedenborgians under Proud [priest of the Hatton Garden Temple] but declined, nothwithstanding his high opinion of Swedenborg.[17]

[13] *A Memoir of J. J. Garth Wilkinson* (London, 1911), p. 25: "...in 1838 Mr. Charles Augustus Tulk, then Member of Parliament for Poole, lent Mr. Wilkinson a copy of William Blake's Songs of Innocence and of Experience..." The rest of Morris's story does not appear.

[14] "William Blake's Family," *N&Q*, CXCIII (1948), 296-298.

[15] "Irish Words in Blake's Mythology," *Dublin Magazine*, XXV, No. 4 (Oct. 1950), 27-33; "to be continued."

[16] H. M. Margoliouth, *N&Q*, CXCII (1947), 280-381.

[17] "William Blake, Künstler, Dichter und religiöser Schwärmer," *Vaterländisches Museum* (Hamburg, 1811), pp. 107-131, translated by K. A. Esdaile, "An Early Appreciation of Blake," *The Library*, 3rd ser., V (1914), 229-256.

Robinson is not likely to have garbled this sort of information. Moreover, the discrimination between Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians (as Gilchrist put it, Blake "hardly became a proselyte or 'Swedenborgian' proper") is borne out by Blake's reference in his *Milton* (published in 1808) to Swedenborg as a "Samson shorn by the Churches" and the exclamation, "their God I will not worship in their Churches." But another inaccuracy on the part of the biographers, namely the assumption that Blake did join the New Church in 1789, has led to their rejection of Crabb Robinson's statement as "apparently erroneous" (thus Miss Wilson).

What strengthened the speculations of Morris was the discovery in 1915 by Charles Higham, a London bookseller and Swedenborgian, of the names W. Blake and C. Blake in a New Church document of April 13, 1789—a discovery immediately and inaccurately assimilated into the legend.[18] What more logical than that, after a boyhood steeped in Swedenborgian talk, Blake should lead his wife to the Swedenborgian church? But no one joined the London New Church on Easter Monday of 1789. Rather, some eighty members and nonmembers assembled for a five-day General Conference devoted to the reading aloud of passages from the Master and the discussion of resolutions embodying doctrinal points. Here was Swedenborgian talk, perhaps the first in which Blake was ever steeped. Registration on the first day of the Conference consisted in adding one's name to the printed Conference Call, a circular letter praising Swedenborg's "genuine truths" and declaring for the establishment of a church. W. and C. Blake are the thirteenth and fourteenth names of eighteen added to an initial seventy-seven (a list which includes, by the way, no known friends of Blake). There were several English Blakes, but our Blake's marginalia of the time make it pretty certain that it was he who attended this conference (the first day at least);[19] and C. Blake could be his mother, his sister or his wife (all Catherines). But there is no record that anyone named Blake took the steps of communication and baptism which were required for church membership.

The marginalia tell a very different story, patent enough if we are not confused by the legend. Suffice it to say here that Blake's first Swedenborgian marginalia, on the 1788 *Divine Love of Angels*, evince close interest in the Swedenborgian concepts but no long acquaintance

[18] *N&Q*, CLX (1915), 276-277.

[19] For details of the Conference see Robert Hindmarsh, *Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church* (London, 1861), pp 96 ff., and Morris, *op. cit.* Davies, who erroneously calls Blake "an active member," also errs in thinking of the signature as appended to the series of Conference resolutions (*op. cit.*, pp. 31, 34).

with them, an interest that is antisectarian and premised on the understanding that "the Whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all." Going through the *Aphorisms* of Lavater at about the same time, Blake underlined disapproval of the sort of man "who adheres to a sect."[20] Reading *Divine Love* after the April Conference or after some previous visit to the London group, Blake discovered that the printed doctrine differed in some points from "what was said in the Society." His notes mark a relish for passages stressing the primacy of the affections over the understanding, though he chides Swedenborgian pretentiousness in making a mystery of things "known to me and thousands," and translates the theology into terms of his own belief in "the Poetic Genius, who is the Lord." He marks several passages as contradictory or "False," but in most instances is willing to give the Swedish sage the benefit of the doubt ("Surely this is an oversight," and so forth). It should be noted that the various passages read during the 1789 Conference (listed in Hindmarsh and quoted fully in Morris) display largely the humanitarian side of the New Doctrine.

By 1790 Blake had discovered and been repelled by the sterner side of Swedenborg and by the "Priestcraft" of his followers. In the 1790 *Divine Providence* he detects foreknowledge absolute and will have none of it. His notes are withering blasts at the "Lies & Priestcraft" of both Swedenborg and his English translator. And Blake's 1790 *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is full of ridicule of Swedenborg's *Of Heaven and Hell and Things Seen and Heard*, probably first encountered in a new 1789 translation. If Blake had been well read in Swedenborg, even in the tracts issued by the London Society after 1784, he would have discovered before 1790 that Swedenborg was "a Spiritual Predestinarian," as he now called him.

Perhaps from the beginning Blake's attitude was less that of an enthusiast than that of a poet and artist on the lookout for "the foundations of great things." His subsequent ambivalence toward Swedenborg never included approval of the priests or sect.[21]

Does the conclusion we have reached leave Blake's bookshelf bare for thirty-one years? On the contrary, manifest sources of his early writing include—to name examples that come to mind—Rousseau's *Emile*,

[20] Schorer gives the *Aphorisms* a wrong date of 1787 and then considers Lavater a path to Swedenborg. Though dated 1788 on the title page, the *Aphorisms* appeared "in the beginning" of 1789, according to Knowles, *Life and Writings of Fuseli* (London, 1831), I, 159. The first review I have found appeared in the summer of 1789.

[21] The remark attributed to Blake by Morris—quoting Garth Wilkinson (whom he has already misquoted) quoting Tulk—is of dubious provenance but not improbable: "that 'he had two different states, one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings and one in which he disliked them.'"

Voltaire's *Ignorant Philosopher*, Goethe's *Werther*, Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio*, Macpherson, Descartes, Locke, Plutarch, Johnson, Shakespeare, Milton, Homer, Spenser, Young, Thomson, Sterne, Chatterton, Gray, Mason, Barbauld, several historians and antiquarians, and, of course, the Bible—an intellectual fare hardly to be defined as "entirely within the limits of Swedenborgianism," even if we were to restore Swedenborg to the list.

It remains true that we have little knowledge of what Blake was doing or thinking between late 1784 (when he wrote *An Island in the Moon*) and 1788-89, the time of the first marginalia and of the formation of the first London New Church. We cannot reject out of hand the possibility that at some time in this half decade Blake may have been drawn into the Theosophical Society for Promoting the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, by Translating, Printing, and Publishing the Theological Writings of the Honourable Emmanuel Swedenborg, which was formed by Robert Hindmarsh and five or six others in 1784. Yet neither Blake nor any person with whom his name has been associated (with the exception of John Tulk, father of C. A. Tulk) is listed among the handful of persons who were drawn together by Hindmarsh in December 1783 and who formally associated in the following year, nor among the lists of thirteen and sixteen persons who met on two occasions in 1787 to found the New Church, which opened in Eastcheap on January 27, 1788.[22]

Hindmarsh, assembling the contemporary documents and adding his reminiscences some forty years later, compiled a list of thirty-two "Gentlemen of respectability" ("besides many others, now deceased, whose names are not recollected") who "found their way to our meetings"—presumably over the course of many years. In this composite and dateless list we do find the names of two of Blake's fellow artists, William Sharp (sixth on the list) and John Flaxman (ninth). Sharp, an engraver, was probably acquainted with Blake in the 1780s; we know that Flaxman was. Though Hindmarsh does not tell us how soon either Sharp or Flaxman entered the society, his list gives them addresses from which they moved in 1787,[23] and we have independent evidence that as early as February 1784 Flaxman was reading or intending to read some Swedenborg.[24] Yet neither Sharp nor Flaxman

[22] Hindmarsh, pp. 10-17, 28.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 32. Flaxman did not live at "Wardour Street" after 1787. Sharp is listed as "of Bartholomew Lane, Threadneedle Street, afterwards of Charles Street"; and his signed engravings show that he moved from Bartholomew Lane to Charles Street in 1787.

[24] On Feb. 10, 1784, in a letter to William Hayley, whom he had recently visited, Flaxman wrote this postscript: "Pray when you have a favourable opportunity let me have Swedenborg, which reminds me of the Hedg-hogg who is very well..." Morchard Bishop, *Blake's Hayley* (London, 1951), p. 78.

was involved in the formation of the New Church; neither signed the call or attended the Conference of 1789; Flaxman indeed was in Rome from the autumn of 1787 until 1794, after which he did become active among Swedenborgians.

Crabb Robinson's reference in 1810 to efforts to get Blake "to join the Swedenborgians under Proud" could apply to any time after 1797, when Proud became their priest, and possibly to efforts by Flaxman or Sharp, though Sharp's interest in the New Church had perhaps been replaced by more sensational doctrines long before this. One reason for Blake's declining the invitation had always been in his make-up and is noted in Robinson's diary for January 30, 1815, in the words of Flaxman, who had been "very chatty" to Robinson about Blake and about "Sharp the engraver, who seems to be the ready dupe of any and every religious fanatic and imposter":

> Sharp, tho' deceived by [Richard] Brothers [i.e. in 1795], became a warm partisan [in 1802] of Joanna Southcott. He endeavored to make a convert of Blake the engraver, but as Flaxman judiciously observed, such men as B[lake] are not fond of playing the second fiddle.

Sharp was an engraver of some prominence, but the record of his intellectual career is very obscure. In 1780-82 he was interested in the Society for Constitutional Information, and in 1792-94 was one of its leading members. After its supression he turned to the radical mysticism of the antimilitarist Brothers, whose portrait he engraved in 1795. Sharp was one of the group who brought Joanna from Exeter to London in 1802; and in his publication of her *Communications* in the following year he approved of her effort to proselytize "a Clergyman of the Established Church" who "had prejudices in favour of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg," prejudices which Sharp considered outmoded by Joanna's more particular revelation.[25] Since Sharp continued to believe in Joanna (he published a second edition of the *Communications* in 1823), his Swedenborgian period probably belonged to the mid or late 1780s. It would be plausible to hypothesize the following sequence of probabilities: that Sharp interested Blake in the New Church around 1789, that he and Blake were together in their interest

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Davies (p. 32) accepts the tradition that has Blake getting acquainted with the society via Flaxman five or six years before the 1789 Conference; but in correspondence he offers the point that at any rate Blake's "interest obviously begins to develop" only at the time of the Conference, and calls attention to the fact that Blake, writing to Flaxman in 1800, lists Paracelsus and Boehme as early influences but omits Swedenborg—an oversight more readily understandable if we suppose that Flaxman had *not* effected the introduction.

[25] *Divine and Spiritual Communications written by Joanna Southcott*, 2nd ed. (London, 1823), p. 27, note on Joanna's letter of Oct. 24, 1802. For Sharp's prominence in the Society for Constitutional Information, see especially V. C. Miller, *Joel Barlow* (Hamburg, 1932), pp. 4, 10-11,16,17,32. And see my *Blake: Prophet against Empire* (Princeton, 1953).

in Paine and English Jacobinism around 1792,[26] that Sharp tried to interest Blake in the pacifist revelation of Brothers around 1795, and that, finally, Sharp tried to "make a convert of Blake" to the apocalyptic revelation of Southcott around 1803. This seems to have been the course of Sharp's enthusiasms. But except for the Southcottian phase we have no direct evidence that Blake associated with Sharp. And here all Sharp got for his pains was Blake's skeptical quatrain, "On the Virginity of the Virgin Mary & Johanna Southcott."[27]

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[26] For a curious attack on Swedenborgianism as akin to revolutionary Illuminism, see [Robert Clifford], *Application of Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism to the Secret Societies of Ireland and Great Britain* (London, 1798), pp. xvii-xviii. Clifford and Barruel call to our attention those aspects of apocalyptic symbolism which are easily adaptable to revolutionary principles; compare what Blake does in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Unfortunately Clifford does not discuss the London society.

[27] In the Pickering MS, *ca.* 1801-03. Yet Blake must surely have been aware of Sharp's career. In the 1770s when Blake was collecting prints, his favorite history painter was Mortimer, whose work was often engraved by Sharp (e.g., five plates for Bell's *Poets* in 1778). In 1782 we find both Blake and Sharp engraving after Stothard, in 1788 after Fuseli.

A suggestive early document is the two-volume *Discourses on Various Subjects* (London, 1779) by Rev. Jacob Duché, with two engravings by Sharp, after West, and a subscription list that includes "William Sharp, Esq.," "Jacob Bryant, Esq." (the antiquary whose euhemerism pleased Blake), and "Mr. William Blake" (a suitably modest appelation for one just ending his apprenticeship—yet possibly some other Blake, of course). These names were first noted by Charles Higham in an article on Duché in the *New-Church Magazine*, XV (1896), 389 ff., reprinted in expanded form in the *New-Church Review*, XXII (1915), 210 ff. In 1896 Higham did not think of Blake as a Swedenborgian, but differentiated names "of New Church interest" (including Sharp's) from those "of public interest" (including Blake's—and Dr. Johnson's). In 1915 Highham dropped this distinction, but the item, though noted by Keynes, has never been taken into the Blake legend.

Duché had just come from America (Dec. 1777) where, though chaplain of Congress, he had despaired of the republic. His *Discourses* are of interest as the sermons of a man who was to become "every year [after 1782] more interested in the visions of Swedenborg." Through the influence of kindred spirits on the committee of the Female Orphans' Asylum in Lambeth, he became chaplain to the Asylum (1782-89), where he preached sermons and held Sunday discussion groups of interest to Swedenborgians. When he wrote the *Discourses* Duché had not yet encountered Swedenborg, but he had long been immersed in Boehme and Law. Their names do not appear in the work, but an assimilated Boehmenism is evident: "Wisdom herself" is Boehme's "Sophia"; the recurrent symbolism of emanation and inclination, seed and tree, illumination of the inward eye, etc., is unobtrusive but clearly in the tradition. Blake, who says he knew Boehme before the American war, would have been prepared for the "spiritual sense" of these volumes. At the same time, the influence of Duché would have been against separatism and outward ceremony. His successors at the Asylum, Higham shows, were also nonseparatist Swedenborgians. Can acquaintance with their circle have influenced the Blakes' move to the Asylum neighborhood in 1793? Duché's son Thomas (d. 1790) was a musician who composed hymns for the Asylum organist and a painter who studied under West and gave his engraving to Sharp.

LA PREMIÈRE (?) TRADUCTION EN VERS FRANÇAIS D'UNE POÉSIE ALLEMANDE

FERNAND BALDENSPERGER

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ayant, sous la plume experte d'Henri Peyre, exposé le dernier état des problèmes respectifs des lettres françaises et allemandes (*CL*, II, 1950, 1-15), il est équitable de confier au même périodique le commentaire de la singularité annoncée par ce titre.

Un Français qui a passé dix ans en Allemagne, grand admirateur de Voltaire et familier de Saint-Evremond et de Bussy-Rabutin, sans compter des auteurs étrangers comme Gracian, Addison et Swift, semblerait-il *a priori* désigné pour une telle initiative? Auteur de *Lettres françaises et germaniques, ou Réflexions militaires, littéraires et critiques sur les Français et les Allemands* qui sont après sa mort publiées en 1740 par leur destinataire, il a maintenu un farouche anonymat. Au cours des années 1738-39, il a continué à nouer, avec un ami, officier comme il l'avait lui-même été, une correspondance longtemps orientée vers des techniques militaires, avivée par l'affaire de Dantzig qu'il a suivie de près en 1735-36. Ensuite, obligé de reconnaître qu'un long séjour en pays germanique ne l'a point familiarisé à fond avec l'idiome indigène, il examine assez impartialement des problèmes de civilisation comparée. Tacite aidant, il se préoccupe de rechercher dans quelle mesure d'anciennes particularités se retrouvent chez des contemporains, éloignés ainsi de ses propres compatriotes. En des temps féconds en recueils de lettres, authentiques ou fictives, il a certainement donné tous ses soins à ses propres épanchements épistolaires, et les *Lettres anglaises* de L. B. de Muralt (1725), qu'il mentionne à l'occasion, auraient sans doute servi de modèle à la publication que sa mort, vers la fin de l'année 1739, l'a empêché de préparer lui-même.

C'est dans la lettre X de la seconde partie que notre homme, ayant insisté sur les mérites de finesse et de bon ton que la France se pique de pratiquer, fait état des tardives valeurs dont les lettres allemandes s'avisent. Il connait l'effort, surtout voué aux traductions, de divers auteurs, et cite Gottsched, Brockes, Opitz et surtout Neukirch, loué pour sa version en vers de *Télémaque* (dont il reproche à Voltaire de méconnaître le mérite). Mais de son côté c'est Christian Günther qui l'arrête: ce poète à la carrière désemparée (1695-1723) qui méritera plus tard l'éloge de Goethe, lui semble justifier, par sa "singularité" même, une mention particulière, et son "Ode à la For-

tune," avec sa dernière strophe si brutale, l'a dûment frappé. Il cite celle-ci en prose, comme pour se préparer à un plus digne exploit:

> Tiens, voici tes plus beaux titres. Tu n'es qu'une girouette, une femmelette aveugle, une voie de perdition, une garce à laquais, une sorcière, la sœur de la folie; une hâbleuse, une trompeuse: et qui est-ce qui me punira comme athée parce que je te blasphème?

Par une sorte de réhabilitation, "une stance de l'*Ode à Dieu* de Günther m'a tellement plu, que je me suis avisé de la traduire en vers français... Je suis peut-être le premier Français que se soit avisé de traduire des vers allemands en vers français; et quoique je ne me pique pas d'être Poëte, je suis pourtant charmé de vous montrer dans cette occasion que je ne suis point prévenu contre vos Auteurs, et que je reconnais bon ce qui me paraît tel..."

Le traducteur improvisé n'a pas manqué de faire précéder sa traduction du texte original de Günther; faisons comme lui, pour la singularité du cas:

Was willst Du mit dem Schatten zanken?
Beweis' an Stärkern deine Macht:
Wer wird Dir in der Hölle danken?
Ach! hast Du dies noch nicht bedacht?
Du kommst mit Donner, Blitz und Sturm;
Wer ist der große Feind? Ein Wurm.

TRADUCTION

Grand Dieu! ta Justice éternelle
Veut-elle se mettre en courroux
Contre moi, figure mortelle,
Ombre trop vile pour tes coups?
Arme plutôt ta main fatale
Contre la Puissance infernale
Qui brave la foudre et l'éclair!
Mais à quoi bon ce bruit de guerre,
Ces dards, ces carreaux, ce tonnerre
Quand ton Ennemi n'est qu'un Ver.

Si brefs que soient ces textes, leur confrontation permet de mesurer un écart indéniable: la laïcité du Parnasse français, dix ans avant les premiers chants de la *Messiade*, avait quelque mérite à affronter le poétique élan d'un Silésien douloureux, génie désordonné qui devait, malgré tout, laisser une trace dont témoignent des éditions répétées de ses œuvres jusqu'au milieu du XVIII[e] siècle. Et quand on songe que c'est en 1799 seulement, à Hambourg, que d'amicales rencontres entre Klopstock et l'abbé Delille émigré permirent aux Muses rivales d'ébaucher un vivant arbitrage, c'est un certain mérite d'initiative qu'il faut concéder à notre versificateur improvisé de 1739.

Qui était-il? Son farouche anonymat peut-il être percé, alors que le destinataire de ses *Lettres*, en s'excusant de se croire "en droit de

les donner au Public, à qui je me suis imaginé qu'elles ne pourraient qu'être utiles," est fort discret sur l'identité de cet ancien officier. "Philosophe chrétien," il est mort "tranquillement," après des années de retraite sagace et paisible "à la campagne chez un de ses Amis pour y étudier avec plus de tranquillité": il avait environ quarante ans et restait en possession de tous ses moyens—une mémoire stupéfiante, une clairvoyance entachée de quelque désinvolture à l'égard des grands de ce monde—quand une fièvre chaude l'emporta en huit jours.

On pourrait être tenté de le chercher parmi les centaines de réfugiés que la révocation de l'Edit de Nantes avait voués à cette autre émigration; mais s'il est né vers l'année 1700, s'il a commencé par une carrière militaire assez poussée en France, ce ne serait point de confession qu'il s'agirait quand sa "religion" lui aurait fait quitter le service et passer d'abord en Hollande. Sa lettre X déprécie nettement la moyenne du Refuge: "à la réserve de quelques-uns, je n'en donnerais pas une pipe de tabac." Mieux encore, sa défense intégrale de Louis XIV, l'équilibre qu'il maintient entre le huguenot Henri IV et le catholique Louis XIV dans l'exercice de droits souverains qui lui semblent inhérents à la royauté—tout cela serait plutôt l'indice contraire à toute intégration dans le "Refuge."

C'est par contre, dirait-on, un jansénisme malencontreux[1] qui lui aurait fait quitter l'armée française—et peut-être la Maison du Roi, sur lequel il est manifestement renseigné "de l'intérieur." Aussi déplore-t-il particulièrement une frivolité néfaste à la stricte discipline, un relâchement fâcheux de la hiérarchie, et la difficulté pour des officiers de valeur, mais sans appui mondain, d'être promu aux grades supérieurs. Son attachement à Fénelon, sa dénonciation de diverses activités de Jésuites, même dans l'armée qu'il a quittée, surtout dans l'éducation de la jeunesse nobiliaire, s'expliqueraient ainsi. "Un Français qui endosse un froc revêt un nouvel esprit." Peut-être un coup de revers à Mme de Maintenon, et même ce qu'il parait savoir de membres de la famille La Motte, sont-ils des indices lointains de dispositions qui ne l'empêchent nullement de défendre la valeur militaire de ses compatriotes, quand l'indiscipline due à l'arrivisme de certains chefs ne leur fait point tort. Et les Français, "sociables" avant tout quand la

[1] Dans un article de la *Revue de Littérature comparée*, juillet-septembre 1948, à propos de K. Ph. Moritz, j'ai eu l'occasion de signaler quelques indices de pénétration "rhénane" des idées de Mme Guyon. L'extension dans ces régions de l'archevêché de Cambrai peut avoir eu quelque rôle dans la défection de notre personnage, qui avait tenu garnison dans la région du Nord-Est.

C'est d'autre part de "poésie," au sens lyrique et confidentiel du terme, qu'il est question: la *Nef des Fols* de S. Brandt (1494) ayant eu, même en vers, des traductions dans la plupart des langues, son inspiration burlesque n'était pas un précédent.

vanité du "petit-maître" et de la "coquette" ne détériore point leurs qualités, ont en particulier le mérite de faire aux lettres et aux arts la place qui leur revient, et que son audace de traducteur imprévu attesterait à sa manière. Et son anonymat, si notre conjecture est correcte, ne serait point fait pour déparer la réserve et la discrétion impliquées en une attitude digne de Port-Royal.

Paris

T. S. ELIOT AND GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

BRUCE A. MORRISSETTE

A PERSISTENT theme in Eliot studies is the poet's debt to earlier writers, with the establishing of more or less convincing parallels in cases where direct borrowings cannot be found. "Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope," Eliot has exhibited an eclecticism perhaps unmatched in the history of poetry. The list of those to whom his work owes something extends from Cavalcanti and Dante through the Elizabethans and the Metaphysicals to Gautier, Corbière, Laforgue, Rimbaud, and Joyce, as the studies of Richard Aldington, René Taupin, Mario Praz, Edmund Wilson, Luciano Anceschi, Claude Magny, and others have, with varying degrees of convincingness, proved (see the articles in R. March's *T. S. Eliot: A Symposium* and L. Unger's *T. S. Eliot: A Selected Critique*). Eliot himself, with his passionate belief that the poet must possess a sense of the past, seems to invite this type of critical approach; and an enriched understanding of Eliot's poetry has been made possible by what might in other circumstances seem to be only a sterile game of source hunting or forced comparisons.

René Taupin, who mentioned briefly in *L'Influence du symbolisme français sur la poésie américaine* (p. 220) that "Eliot a connu pendant son séjour à Paris Apollinaire," found little to develop by way of similarities between the expatriate American and the cosmopolite Pole. He presented striking evidence of the influence of Corbière, Laforgue, and Gautier, involving verbal similarities and outright translation, but limited his remarks concerning Apollinaire and Eliot to two points—the device found in both of a sudden change of time and place at the end of a poem, and the grouping of "objets les plus divers" with no "préoccupation apparente d'expression personnelle"—citing one brief example of each, neither of which bears direct resemblances to passages in Eliot.

Since Apollinaire died in 1918, his work was finished almost before Eliot's was begun. Correspondences between the two must be regarded then as evidence either of influence upon Eliot or as "accidental" parallels attributable to, say, a common tradition or some sort of affinity in poetic outlook and technique, similar perhaps to that discovered by Mario Praz between Eliot and Eugenio Montale. Whatever the explanation may be, the existence of kindred stylistic traits in poets of the same era cannot fail to hold implications for both readers and critics. To the sense of the past must certainly be added an equally significant faculty—the sense of the present.

The typical Eliot protagonist of the early poems indulges in an ironic

act of self-belittlement, in which we sense an "objective correlative" for the unhappy temper of the age:

> You will see me any morning in the park
> Reading the comics and the sporting page.
> Particularly I remark
> An English countess goes upon the stage.
> A Greek was murdered at a Polish dance.
> ("Portrait of a Lady")

In similar terms Apollinaire makes the "I" of his poem turn to the press:

> Voilà la poésie ce matin et pour la prose il y a les journaux
> Il y a les livraisons à 25 centimes pleines d'aventures policières
> Portraits des grands hommes et mille titres divers.
> ("Zone")

Eliot's abrupt transitions to a refrain-like compulsive figure, which seems to evoke the cocktail-hour décor of *ennui* against which the poet's thoughts form an incommensurate counterpoint, are well known. Twice in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" we find:

> In the room the women come and go
> Talking of Michelangelo.

Twice likewise, and equally out of "context," we encounter in Apollinaire's "Souvenir du Douanier":

> La belle Américaine
> Qui rend les hommes fous
> Dans une ou deux semaines
> Partira pour Corfou

Or:

> HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
> HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
> *(The Waste Land)*

And in Apollinaire:

> Je me disais Guillaume il est temps que tu viennes
> Je me disais Guillaume il est temps que tu viennes
> ("Cortège")

Even the fragmentary farewell of *The Waste Land*

> Ta ta. Goonight. Goonight,

finds a sort of echoing parallel in

> Adieu adieu
> Soleil cou coupé

of Apollinaire's "Zone."

The famous passage of the folkloristic Mrs. Porter and her daughter, with its intrusion of a foreign phrase and its reference to childhood, con-

tains the elements of a similar group of lines by the French poet:

O the moon shone bright on Mrs. Porter
And on her daughter
They wash their feet in soda water
Et O ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!
(The Waste Land)

Regarde mais regarde donc
Le vieux se lave les pieds dans la cuvette
Una volta ha inteso dire Chè voi
Je me mis à pleurer en me souvenant de vos enfances
("A travers l'Europe")

Eliot's use of the tarot cards in *The Waste Land* goes much further in symbolic occultism than anything in Apollinaire; but his peculiar genius for name coinage in this connection and the air of whispered mystery with which he surrounds his female soothsayer are reminiscent of certain lines of Apollinaire:

Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante,
Had a bad cold, nevertheless
Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,
With a wicked pack of cards. Here, said she,
Is your card...
Thank you. If you see dear Mrs. Equitone,
Tell her I bring the horoscope myself:
One must be so careful these days.

Madame Salmajour avait appris en Océanie à tirer les cartes
C'est là-bas qu'elle avait eu l'occasion de participer
À une scène savoureuse d'anthropophagie
Elle n'en parlait pas à tout le monde
("Sur les prophéties")

Heureusement que nous avons vu M. Panado
Et nous sommes tranquilles de ce côté-là
("À travers l'Europe")

Especially in his early poems, Eliot displayed a predilection for scenes of degraded urban existence, the tin-can-littered, rat-infested milieu of the down and out. Against this background stands a nameless individual whose lonely emptiness embodies the poet's mood:

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through the narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows?
("The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock")

We recognize the kinship with certain of Apollinaire's characters:

Un monsieur en bras de chemise
Se rase près de la fenêtre
("Souvenirs")

And in Apollinaire's equivalent of "rat's alley" we see that "Un rat y

recule," and "Une souris verte file parmi la mousse." Eliot's

> One of the low on whom assurance sits
> As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire
> *(The Waste Land)*

is not without similarity to Apollinaire's "Émigrant de Landor Road":

> Le vêtement d'un lord mort sans avoir payé
> Au rabais l'habilla comme un millionaire

The apocalyptic collapse of:

> Falling towers
> Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
> Vienna London
> Unreal
> *(The Waste Land)*

may also seem to be the accelerated destruction of Apollinaire's quiet litany of cities:

> Paris Vancouver Hyères Maintenon New-York et les Antilles
> ("Les Fenêtres")
>
> O Lille Saint-Quentin Laon Mauberge Vouziers
> ("À l'Italie")

The Dantesque vision in *The Waste Land* of the innumerable dead, one of whom is stopped and addressed by the poet, finds a counterpart in "La Maison des morts":

> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many . . .
> And each man fixed his eyes before his feet . . .
> There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying:
> "Stetson! . . ."
>
> Et les morts m'accostèrent
> Avec des mines de l'autre monde . . .
> Alors je les dénombrai . . .
> Je les invitai à une promenade

One of the few examples of onomatopoeia in Eliot closely resembles one in Apollinaire:

> Only a cock stood on the rooftree
> Co co rico co co rico
> *(The Waste Land)*
>
> Nul coq n'a chanté aujourd'hui
> Kikiriki
> ("Rhénane d'automne")

A few tenuous parallels offer only the vaguest hint of similarity: the role of Tiresias in *The Waste Land* and in the "surréaliste" drama *Les Mamelles de Tirésias;* Apollinaire's "Le Vent nocturne" and Eliot's "Rhapsody on a Windy Night"; Dante's phrase "Sovegna vos" in *The*

Waste Land and the "Souvenez-vous-en" of "Le Voyageur"; Apollinaire's "Les Palais du tonnerre" and Eliot's

> Prison and palace and reverberation
> Of thunder
>
> *(The Waste Land)*

—and the evocation of Lazarus in "Prufrock" and in Apollinaire's "Zone."

The symbolic rose of many passages in Eliot echoes not only Remy de Gourmont's *Litanies de la rose,* but also Apollinaire's metaphoric flower of the mind:

> Multifoliate rose
>
> ("The Hollow Men")
>
> Rose of Memory
> Rose of forgetfulness
>
> ("Ash Wednesday")
>
> Footfalls echo in the memory
> Down the passage which we did not take
> Towards the door we never opened
> Into the rose-garden
>
> ("Burnt Norton")
>
> Et les roses de l'électricité s'ouvrent encore
> Dans le jardin de ma mémoire
> ...rose des vents
>
> *(Alcools)*
>
> la rose ardente
>
> ("Mortification des roses")

What was in Apollinaire and Gourmont a symbolic tonality appears in the later poet as the extensive complex studied by Leonard Unger in his article, "T. S. Eliot's Rose Garden" (in *T. S. Eliot: A Selected Critique*).

In a conversational tone, almost in a "dying fall," Eliot often suggests an inhibited, neurotic doubt of self and of reality:

> And indeed there will be time...
> Time for you and time for me,
> And time yet for a hundred indecisions
> And for a hundred visions and revisions
> Before the taking of a toast and tea.
>
> ("The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock")

Compare Apollinaire, in one of the most Eliotesque of all his poems:

> Il y a aussi le temps qu'on peut chasser ou faire revenir ...
> Mille phantasmes impondérables
> Auxquels il faut donner de la réalité
>
> ("La jolie rousse")

Apollinaire's sense of the identity of his experience with that of another writer, apparent in

Notre histoire est noble et tragique...
Aucun détail indifférent
Ne rend notre amour pathétique
Et Thomas de Quincey buvant
L'opium poison doux et chaste
A sa pauvre Anna allait rêvant
Passons passons puisque tout passe
("Cors de chasse")

is not unlike Eliot's appeal to poets of the past:

Webster was much possessed by death
And saw the skull beneath the skin...
Donne, I suppose, was such another
Who found no substitute for sense...
("Whispers of Immortality")

Reading Apollinaire, we often become conscious of an atmosphere like that in Eliot, which upon analysis seems to depend upon a *raccourci* of remembered elements:

Le rossignol aveugle essaya de chanter
Mais l'effraie ululant il trembla dans sa cage...
—On dirait que le vent dit des phrases latines...
—Gertrude et son voisin Martin enfin s'épousent...
—Encore un peu de café Lenchen s'il te plaît
("Les Femmes")

The nightingale, the noise of the wind, the sudden shift to the colloquial cliché, are all present in the space of forty lines of *The Waste Land* (lines 100-141).

Much of the devastating comic force of the Sweeney poems and other early pieces by Eliot involving grotesquely named creatures in distorted postures depends upon devices and rhythms already found in Apollinaire:

But this or such was Bleistein's way:
A saggy bending of the knees
And elbows, with the palms turned out,
Chicago Semite Viennese...

Princess Volupine extends
A meagre, blue-nailed, phthisic hand
To climb the waterstair. Lights, lights,
She entertains Sir Ferdinand

Klein. Who clipped the lion's wings
And flea'd his rump and pared his claws?
Thought Burbank, meditating on
Time's ruin, and the seven laws.
("Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar")

Dans la forêt avec sa bande
Schinderhannes s'est désarmé
Le brigand près de sa bande
Hennit d'amour au joli mai

Benzel accroupi lit la Bible
Sans voir que son chapeau pointu
À plume d'aigle sert de cible
À Jacob Born le mal foutu
Juliette Blaesius qui rote
Fait semblant d'avoir le hoquet
Hannes pousse une fausse note
Quand Schulz vient portant un baquet
("Schinderhannes")

Lastly, the powerful ending of *The Waste Land,* which makes use of Oriental syllables with something of the force of a cabbalistic incantation:

These fragments have I shored against my ruins
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
Shantih shantih shantih

recalls the earlier, and much feebler, attempt of Apollinaire to produce a similar effect:

Et dans la synagogue pleine de chapeaux on agitera les loulabim
Hanoten ne Kamoth bagoim tholshoth baleoumim
(Alcools)

The point, again, is not that Eliot may have "borrowed" from Apollinaire, in the sense that he may be said to have borrowed from Corbière or Laforgue, though in some instances it is tempting to attribute similarities to unconscious, if not conscious, memory. Direct borrowings are among the least interesting of literary phenomena. Their discovery occurs instantaneously and their significance rarely resists definition. In the case of Eliot and Apollinaire, we find developed in the later and greater poet insights, tonalities, devices, and themes already present in the other works, but capable of an almost infinite expansion in tension, meaning, and aesthetic potency, unforeseen by Apollinaire and realized by Eliot. Poetry, Eliot writes, is less the expression of an emotion than the creation of a new one. But the creation itself uses, and transmutes, familiar elements. As Malraux has said, the point of departure for an art work is always some other work of art.

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BOOK REVIEWS

JUAN DE MENA, POETA DEL PRERRENACIMIENTO ESPAÑOL. By María Rosa Lida de Malkiel. Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1950. (Publicaciones de la *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, I.)

Before the publication of this impressive book Mrs. Malkiel had already distinguished herself by a number of comparative studies in *Motivgeschichte* in which she traced the history of motifs as diverse as Dido, the nightingale, and the poetic description of dawn from their earliest appearance in classical poetry into Spanish literature.[1] In these studies she proved herself endowed with an uncommonly keen sensitivity for shades of meaning and poetic perception of reality. With power of analysis she combined a profound awareness of the ever-changing current of history, the various moments of which determine varied poetic approaches to reality.

These qualities come to full fruition in her book on Juan de Mena (1411-56), author of *El Laberinto de la Fortuna*, the *Coronación*, and *Omero romançado*, the first Spanish rendering of the *Iliad* (actually a prose translation of the abbreviated *Ilias Latina*). Mena, until recently cliché-judged as the Spanish Ennius and the imitator of Dante and Lucan, and upbraided for his abundant Latinisms in vocabulary and syntax, has now received his full share of historical justice.

Mrs. Malkiel states her thesis on the first page of the preface. Mena is the foremost poet of a period of transition between the *Libro de buen amor* and Garcilaso, an epoch which is no longer "Middle Ages" and not yet "Renaissance." Mena is torn between the mediaeval heritage, not entirely satisfactory to him any more and from which he consciously pulls away, and a new treasure dimly seen ("un tesoro entrevisto") towards which he consciously draws, but with faltering steps and not always reaching his goal. This concept of Mena's historical position guides the author firmly in her study of the poet's works (pp. 13-146) and his style and language (pp. 157-322), and in her final summary chapter, "Mena prerrenacentista" (pp. 527-549). The chapters "Crítica" (pp. 323-398) and "Influencia" (pp. 399-526) link him with posterity.

What makes this book so gratifying to read is what might be called its volumen, its three-dimensionalness. All facts of literary history, all stylistic and linguistic phenomena, are interpreted as expressions of the peculiar historical situation that shaped Mena's way of existence. Mrs. Malkiel's approach is comparative throughout, be it intra-Hispanic or extra-Hispanic (mostly in relation to ancient and Italian literature, but occasionally also to French and English). By comparison and contrast her subject, Mena, comes to life in all his individuality. Spanish literature in general and Mena in particular appear here as special aspects of the literature of the Western World.

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[1] "El ruiseñor de las Geórgicas y su influencia en la lírica española del Siglo de Oro," *Volkstum und Kultur der Romanen*, XI (1938), 282-289. "Transmisión y recreación de temas grecolatinos en la poesía lírica española," *RFH*, I (1939), 20-63. "Dido y su defensa en la literatura española," *RFH*, IV (1942), 211-252; V (1943), 45-50. "El amanecer mitológico en la poesía narrativa española," *RFH*, VII (1946), 77-110. We should also mention two extensive review articles: "La tradición clásica en España," *NRFH*, V (1951), 193-223, on Highet's *The Classical Tradition*, and "Perduración de la literatura antigua en Occidente," *RP*, V (1951-52), 99-131, on E. R. Curtius' *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*.

The book opens with an analysis of the sources which helped to shape the setting ("el marco narrativo") of Mena's principal work, *El Laberinto*—Providence guiding the poet through the seven planetary circles and showing him the great men and women of the past, present, and future. The author affirms with C. R. Post (*RR*, III, 1912, 233-279) that this device is not merely Dantesque, but generally mediaeval. Then in an excursus (pp. 16-20) not covered by the title of the chapter, she proceeds to assess the influence of Dante. (Similarly, under "Filósofos grandes" we find [pp. 52-55] rather unexpectedly a systematic discussion of Ovid as a source.) More contacts with Dante are shown than Post was willing to recognize. Mena's technique is one of fusion and re-creation of various images from different sources (Dante, St. Isidore, Virgil, etc.). Within the mediaeval framework, he develops his visions, episodes, and *casos ejemplares* mainly under the stimulus of Latin poets (p. 20). In the next chapter, "Contenido histórico," we find a series of studies in which a selected number of motifs and episodes of the *Laberinto* are traced back through literary history, but always with the ultimate goal of establishing the degree of Mena's originality, "aislar lo peculiar de su ingenio" (p. 17). His concept of Fortune, for instance, although simple and without striking novelty or depth, presents an original approach (p. 24). His main source is Boethius, and Boethius' presence is evident here and there throughout the poem. The *topos*, "Harmony of heavens is a lesson for human relations," goes back as far as Sophocles' *Aias* and Euripides' *Phoenician Women* on the one hand, and Jesus Sirach (Ecclesiastes), on the other (p. 29). The vision of the universe (coplas 34-53) strikes modern readers (including Menéndez Pelayo) as a tedious digression. Mrs. Malkiel not only explains its presence through the epic tradition, originating in the catalogue of ships of *Iliad*, II, but shows also that it was especially suitable to the didactic bent of the late Middle Ages, its love for sonorous ancient names and for visions of fabulous lands. *De imagine mundi* was already established as the main source by the Renaissance commentator Hernán Núñez; this is confirmed by ample parallels. Yet Mena worked upon his source "con un sentido de forma sobria que apunta decididamente al arte moderno, no al medieval" (p. 41). Much of the material of *De imagine mundi* is disregarded by Mena, and Mrs. Malkiel remarks "que si la tradición formal de su poema le impone como motivo obligado la visión panorámica del mundo, su atención ya no se siente atraída por el contenido"; she concludes from this and similar observations that "es la suya una creación frustrada que adolece a la vez de las fallas de lo prematuro y de lo caduco" (p. 42), an interpretation similar to that offered by Post, but stated in more affirmative terms by him (p. 42, note 29). Again we are shown Mena's double attitude in a small detail. His treatment of Chiron, tutor of Achilles, is based on Ovid, *Ars amandi*, I, 13-16. Mena takes Ovid seriously as a source of factual information, but in his elegant rendering of Ovid's distichs in two contrasting lines ("aquel que por arte ferir e domar / pudo a un Archiles, tan grand domador") he displays "orientación hacia una estima estética, desinteresada de los autores que para la Edad Media eran ante todo maestros" (p. 59).

We have reported somewhat extensively the author's treatment of a large episode and a small detail to illustrate the method by which she arrives at her conclusions. The three most famous episodes of the *Laberinto*, "El Conde de Niebla," "Planto de Lorenzo Dávalos," and "La maga y el Condestable," analyzed with the same masterly display of wide reading, supported by what evidently is a prodigious memory combined with a well-organized filing system, show the same complexity of Mena's art—a conscious imitation of classical models held together by the poet's "propia visión." This technique is much less simple than

previous critics, from Hernán Núñez to Menéndez Pelayo, had thought ("La imitación de Lucano dista de ser servil; además dista de ser exclusiva," p. 81). Mrs. Malkiel was able to reap this rich harvest because, as she says in a statement of methodological principles (p. 83), her attention was focussed on the poem itself instead of taking as point of departure only the great classical authors. Boethius, Eusebius, St. Jerome, St. Isidore, and *De imagine mundi* have to be considered together with Virgil, Lucan, and Dante.

Mena as poet of the *cancionero* shares with fellow poets the intellectualism which is the heritage of the troubadours; but it is more marked in him than in others. An outspoken individualism seems to point towards the Renaissance, but the mediaeval element is strongly present in his scholastic procedure, as evidenced in syllogisms and phraseology. Mena's "refinada técnica introspectiva" (p. 91) is still very dominant in Boscán. The interpenetration of the sacred and the profane has always been considered as one of the hallmarks of Spanish literature. Mena's peculiarity is "el juego conceptual en términos de teología más bien que de religión" (p. 94). After sketching as background the tumultuous, unstable conditions of Mena's time and raising the question (p. 93) which Marcel Bataillon recently formulated as "¿Melancolía renacentista o melancolía judía?"[2] —Mena was a *converso*—Mrs. Malkiel emphasizes the poets deep pessimism, for which the conventional lamentations of love are only a pretext in which he cloaks his complete negation of life ("rechazo de la vida"), present not only in his love poetry but elsewhere as well. "La muerte domina la obra de este poeta" (p. 100). The remaining minor poems are subjected to the same careful interpretation. The political poetry is felicitously called "periodismo versificado" (p. 103). The incomplete *Coplas contra los pecados mortales* are actually a retrocession towards mediaeval asceticism, couched in the tradition of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, to be explained by the poet's deep disappointment caused by the fall of D. Alvaro de Luna, King Juan II's favorite and a protector of the *conversos*. Yet, even in these poems there is a vivid perception of reality, particularly in the Homeric similes (p. 116). Observations about Mena's sympathy with the lowly born lead into a brief but brilliant excursus on the three social classes as a *topos* from Adalbert de Laon (1030) to Calderón. Seneca's importance as a source for Mena is contrasted with the role Seneca plays in Petrarch's work (pp. 122 ff.).

The key to the understanding of Mena's prose works—the most maligned by the critics for their excessive Latinisms—is an understanding of the fact that they belong to three different *genera discendi*: the didactic (*Comentario a la "Coronación"*), the narrative (the Ovidian fables inserted in the *Comentario* and the *Omero romançado*), and the ornamental (three prologues, to *Omero romançado*, *Coronación*, and *Libro de las virtuosas y claras mugeres*, respectively). Each genre has its own stylistic requirements, and by taking these requirements into account the modern critic will be able to judge the works objectively, instead of measuring them with the aesthetic categories of his own time and taste. In this fruitful approach Mrs. Malkiel was evidently guided by the teachings of ancient rhetoric (see p. 143). Her close analysis of style enables her to see an evolution in Mena's prose of the ornamental genre, from the very elaborate Latinizing vocabulary and imitation of Boccaccian syntax in the *Prohemio a la Coronación* to a more balanced periodization of his prose with a reduced Latinizing vocabulary in his prologue to the *Libro de las virtuosas y*

[2] *Estudios hispánicos. Homenaje a Archer M. Huntington* (Wellesley, 1952), pp. 39-50.

claras mugeres. Mena's handling of Ovidian fables is treated with special care and illustrated by large selections from his prose (pp. 130-138). Attention to "la exigua diferencia" (p. 136)—Jakob Grimm's *Andacht zum Kleinen*—between original and translation in the *Omero romançado* culminates in this plastic vision symbolizing the anachronistic mingling of two ages far apart: "La insignia medieval ondea lujosamente sobre la sombría ceremonia antigua" (p. 143).

It is well-nigh impossible to give an adequate account of the second major section, subdivided into two parts, "Estilo" (pp. 157-230) and "Lengua" (pp. 231-322). The classification and detailed observation of Mena's means of stylistic adornment could easily deteriorate into a dry systematization. Instead, cohesion and direction are achieved by the critic's own unified purpose, to detect, determine, and understand the underlying spirit which made Mena choose the stylistic devices. The new and the traditional appear again and again in the interpretations to show Mena as a writer whose style reflects his stand between two ages, groping for the right expressions. Mrs. Malkiel's intensive familiarity with classical and mediaeval Latin, as well as with Castilian literature, helps her to discover Mena's models; her thorough linguistic training and uncommon stylistic sensibility enable her to make clear the personal nuance in Mena. Here, too, her method is comparative. Just one example. In the use of the large image Mrs. Malkiel sees both its didactic-mediaeval side and the Homeric development which points towards the Renaissance (p. 164). In the discussion of symmetry (pp. 192 ff.) she shows the interdependence of the metrical structure of the *copla de arte mayor* and the stylistic means employed, such as opposites and hyperbaton. As a footnote to the use of opposites in the two hemistichs of a *copla*, we find a precious excursus on this device, which originated in the Middle Ages, probably with Alain de Lille, and of which the most famous specimen is Petrarch's "Pace non trovo e non ho da far guerra" (pp. 204-207, note 35). The hyperbaton, "piedra de escándalo de la crítica corriente" (p. 206), is convincingly demonstrated to be quite effective, if skillfully used, in binding together the two hemistichs of the dodecasyllable. The type "divina me puede llamar Providencia" seems to be Mena's find (p. 209). On the other hand, forms of apostrophe have the flavor of the style of the courtly brief ("memorial cortesano," p. 210).

The analysis of Mena's language deals with vocabulary (pp. 238-286) and style (pp. 291-322), connected by a short chapter, "Inercia," on the ready-made formulae from which Mena's style is not entirely free. In both portions the reader is shown once more the unbalanced and vacillating juxtaposition of "vocablos grosseros," mainly of Castilian parentage, and of "vocablos muy latinos." This terminology is that of Juan de Valdés' criticism of Mena in his *Diálogo de la lengua* (quoted on p. 234), and is applied to Mena's syntax by Mrs. Malkiel. With her usual technique of stating her position at the beginning and then proving it by a wealth of documentation, she defines Mena's language as a "lengua híbrida, en la que el latinismo chocante por no asimilado hoy se codea con el arcaísmo igualmente chocante por inusitado" (pp. 233-234), by contrast with Góngora, whose language represents "una exclusiva acumulación de latinismos sobre un fondo de lengua normal" (p. 233). Mena's language is one of deliberate choice and not due to an inevitable historical trend.

We must limit ourselves to singling out some points of special interest to the comparatist, very conscious of the fact that by doing so we are not according full justice to this section with its wealth of brilliantly sensitive interpretations. The Gallicisms and Italianisms are much fewer than previously thought (pp. 248 ff.).

Ronsard and Mena have many traits in common, both belonging to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance at the same time (p. 246, note 16). Mena's "Latin" vocabulary is quite complex in itself. Classical and late Latin, scholastic elements, and the spoken Latin of the schools contributed their share (*passim*, especially pp. 256, 262-263, 268-269). Mena's mediaeval position is confirmed negatively by the absence of Horace from his sources and affirmatively by the echoes and imitations of the Latin Christian poets (p. 256). "El vocabulario de teología, filosofía, cosmografía, óptica y fórmulas curialescas es medieval, pero el vocabulario poético, de carácter ornamental, está tomado del latín antiguo, exaltado por el Renacimiento: todavía en Lope perdurerá el pensamiento medieval bajo la brillante ornamentación renacentista" (p. 261).

The unsettled condition of learning and of the learned language is reflected in the inaccurate and often fantastic transcription and accentuation of proper names of classical origin, a phenomenon observed also in mediaeval French literature, "la literatura vulgar más docta de la Edad Media" (p. 264), and in Dante. This state of affairs is due not so much to ignorance as to "despreocupación," since the poet was only intent to "evocar ornamentalmente el mundo superior de la Antigüedad" (p. 264); and the accentuation, disregarding scholarly accuracy, had to "dar sensación de exotismo ornamental." In syntax, as in vocabulary, it is not so much innovation as accumulation which marks Mena's style: apposition, ablative absolute, gerund, present participle, etc. The poet does not consider himself bound by a fixed system of grammar, but feels free to experiment (p. 313).

The third part of the book follows Mena through the centuries—the reactions of the critics and his impact upon other poets. Nebrija's Castilian grammar (1492) take its examples almost exclusively from Mena, but Italian Renaissance criticism is rather condescending, typical of "ese tipo de erudición arrogante, cerrada a todo ideal de cultura que no sea el suyo" (p. 334). Here we have the Italian beginning of modern rationalistic criticism based on principles of classical aesthetics, which reappears even in Spain's Golden Age and reaches its European peak in the eighteenth century. It is still present in the literary historians of the nineteenth, militating against the understanding of Mena in his historical setting (p. 335). After the Italianate poetry of the school of Boscán and Garcilaso replaced the *copla de arte mayor*, Mena is put on a pedestal and looked upon as a "venerable reliquia, a quien se debe disculpar afectuosamente antes de juzgar" (p. 347), and El Brocense in his edition of 1582 provides the convenient formula of the Spanish Ennius or Spanish Lucretius. In the course of this critical review of Mena criticism, interesting sidelights fall on many poets, particularly on those whose stylistic ideal lends itself to a comparison with Mena, such as Herrera (pp. 359-367) and Góngora (pp. 370-372). The survey ends with the Comte de Puymaigre's *La Cour littéraire de don Juan II* (1873), and not, as one would expect, with Menéndez Pelayo, although the latter is referred to throughout the book (p. 398), and, we we might add, mostly critically. While Mrs. Malkiel always succeeds in rectifying or considerably refining Menéndez Pelayo's statements, a comprehensive presentation of his views and contributions would have accorded him a fairer treatment and the chapter itself would have had its logical climax.

The history of Mena's influence on poetry leads from his contemporaries, friends like Santillana (p. 402) and disciples like Gómez Manrique (pp. 413-422), through conscious imitators like Juan de Padilla, el Cartujano (pp. 427-455), into the theater and prose of the fifteenth and sixteenth century and the Renaissance epic of the seventeenth, until Cervantes "quiebra con su sonrisa la ampulosidad del ambicioso mundo épico creado por Mena ... pero no sin antes tributar

a Mena el homenaje de su imitación seria—poco afortunada" (p. 514). Ample documentation by parallel passages support this history of Mena's influence. Mena remains the model as long as the *copla de arte mayor* remains the vehicle of solemn poetry (p. 455). By comparison with the poets who preceded him, with his contemporaries, or with those who follow him, Mena emerges as "el único que posee concepción de forma, selección y mesura." His judiciousness in the selection of mythological and historical *exempla*, his striving for the renovation of the language, distinguish him from the indiscriminate display of learning indulged in by others (p. 462). Mena is one of the few poets whose influence extends also into prose (p. 457), a remark which leads to a search for traces of Mena in the *Celestina* and its continuation (pp. 477-491). There are valuable long notes, e.g., on the *Thebayda* (p. 486, note 38), on Lucan in epic poetry (p. 501, note 49), on Amyclas or "mansa pobreza" as *topoi* (pp. 501-505, 524-526), and on the imitations of the Erichtho scene from Lucan (p. 505).

In the concluding chapter, "Mena prerrenacentista," Mrs. Malkiel again drives home her main thesis by discussing Mena's attitude towards the classics, his individualism, his concept of fame, and his form of nationalism. The last point, not having been touched upon before, comes up somewhat unorganically in this summarizing chapter. These four ideas are usually taken as typically "Renaissance." Nevertheless, they were present in mediaeval civilization, but either for limited periods or in limited territory (Provençal individualism in the twelfth century) or in a secondary role (idea of fame in the nonascetic aspect of mediaeval life). The mediaeval mind saw in the classics mainly a storehouse of information and moral *exempla*. Its interest was mainly didactic and lacked historical perspective, whereas the Renaissance view is primarily aesthetic and, let us add, also more intensely enthusiastic. Both attitudes are present in Mena. Mena's work is cast within the framework of the mediaeval genres but his sense of form, his striving for sobriety and concentration, point toward the new age. "Tardíamente medieval visto desde el humanismo italiano . . . prematuramente moderno considerado dentro de la historia de España," Mena emerges as "el artista representativo de una hora dual de fecundo conflicto y agitada transición" (p. 547).

In a work of this scope there may be interpretations and occasional remarks with which the reader may not find himself in full agreement. In many cases Mrs. Malkiel has protected herself by a cautious "quizá." But such occasional disagreements seem to me irrelevant. The importance of *Juan de Mena* rests perhaps less on the main thesis itself[3] than on the method by which it is proven. Words like "microscopic," "scalpel-sharp dissection" come to mind to characterize it but—and this is most remarkable—her method is employed without killing the spirit. All the facts of Mena's work are brought to light. A line or *copla* may be studied several times under different viewpoints. A certain repetitiousness, unavoidable inherently in Mrs. Malkiel's approach, is relieved by the brilliant versatility of her own writing. The section on language and style should become a model for similar studies of other authors, of which there is a great need.

The book is excellently printed, with ample indices, under the supervision of Antonio Alatorre. There are a few misprints, easily corrected by the reader,

[3] Angel Valbuena Prat, in *Historia de la literatura española*, 2nd ed. (Barcelona, 1946), I, 249 (chapter on "Lo medieval y lo renacentista en el *Labirinto*" [*sic*]), and José Manuel Blecua, in his edition of *El Laberinto* (Madrid, 1943), p. lvii (chapter on "Humanismo y medievalismo"), also clearly saw Mena's position between the two ages.

which are not listed in "Fe de Erratas," but only one is confusing: p. 347, read 1586-1654 for 1564.

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ANATOLE FRANCE AND THE GREEK WORLD. By Loring Baker Walton. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1950. x, 334 p.

In this book Walton has collected Anatole France's references to Greek topics, traced the history of the influence of Greece on his thought and writings, and in general attempted to give us a full picture of the part which the varied culture of Greece played in France's life. Considered from the point of view of its method, the book falls into three parts: (1) two sections rather historical in nature which deal, respectively, with the various phases of his contemporaries' attitude towards France and with the Hellenic revival, the Parnassian movement, and the influence which these literary and scholarly activities had on France's outlook; (2) two long chapters, "Greek Literature" and "Greek Civilization," in which are collected and briefly discussed passages in France's writings in which there are references to particular Greek persons, literary works, statues, temples, myths, and so on; (3) three sections largely devoted to summary and analysis of those works of France which are especially concerned with Greek topics.

Walton himself seems to feel that for many readers the second of these divisions will be the least interesting, since he advises "readers interested in general impressions rather than in detail" that they may "find it profitable" to skip these two long chapters. This would be an extensive omission quantitatively, amounting in fact to considerably more than half the book. Also, my own impression is that Walton is more successful in dealing with the specific matters of detail which occupy him in these chapters than when he attempts to analyze France's relationship to the Greek world in more general terms and to reach more general conclusions. It is true that in their very nature the chapters on "Greek Literature" and "Greek Civilization" would be difficult to make consistently interesting and to raise above the level of a catalog. The other chapters ought, perhaps, to be more interesting and valuable, but I am not at all sure they are so in fact. And Chapter IV contains a great deal too much summary of France's stories.

Walton is much concerned to defend France against the charge of being an Alexandrian and hence a devotee of Greek culture in its decline rather than in its prime. He stresses France's great interest in Homer and Sophocles and in fifth- and early fourth-century Greek sculpture and architecture, and does, I think, make something of a case against the charge of Alexandrianism in France by showing that his attention was often directed to the classical period of Greek culture concentrated at Athens. But it is very difficult to make much of a case for the belief that it was the classical period which had the greatest interest for France as a writer. Quite apart from the fact that any modern Western man must, because of the nature of modern civilization, be more like the Alexandrians than the earlier Greeks, it is noteworthy that, except for one story on the preclassical, non-Attic Homer, France occupied himself with the non-Attic Greek world of the period soon after the birth of Christ. It would seem from this that his main interest as a creative artist was neither the classical nor the Alexandrian period, but the post-Alexandrian period, when Rome had become the political center of the ancient world and Christianity and classical culture were in the early decades of their long struggle. France may well have had a

great regard for Sophocles, but in his own writing he is much more reminiscent of Lucian.

In its manner this is, I am afraid, a definitely prosy book and certainly shows none of the stylistic grace of the writer with whom it deals. Too often Walton threatens to drown himself and his readers in a sea of jargon: "If there was nothing of significance in the Greek inclination of Mendès, such was not the case with José-Maria de Heredia. He differed from Leconte de Lisle and France in that in his case no motive of silence seems to have operated with regard to Ménard . . ." (p. 35). Occasionally his unwillingness to say straight out what he means produces phrases whose precise meaning I do not feel sure of: "In general, however, his [France's] critical restrictions are of a mild nature and are probably based on the findings of others" (p. 131). "The Cyclops are not referred to in their marine connection" (p. 158). There are also irritating stylistic mannerisms which cluster in portions of the book. In some of the early pages Walton is too fond of introducing a topic by asking himself a question which he then proceeds to answer. Too often sections are rounded off with commonplace and rather simple comments: "France clearly looked upon scientific medicine as one of the enlightened products of the Greek genius" (p. 206). At times there is too much transparent effort to avoid repeating a man's name (e.g., pp. 207-208). But, although this treatise is uninspired and uninspiring, it is a solid, careful, and very accurate piece of work. The raw materials for a complete portrait of France and the Greek world have been assembled here; it is in the analysis and synthesis of these materials that the book often appears unsatisfying and incomplete. One is left with the impression that Walton has not, after all, penetrated very deep into the heart of his subject.

Since it is likely that a book on this theme will attract many more readers (and reviewers) who are specialists in modern literature than in Greek antiquity, it might be well for me to list, with occasional brief comments, some of Walton's dubious dicta and slips regarding the Greek world. These are fairly numerous, but of a definitely minor sort. Some are doubtless misprints. Bestriding as it does two worlds and calling for much specialized and often detailed knowledge in two quite different fields, a book of this type is especially liable to pitfalls. Walton has been remarkably successful in avoiding them.

A number of proper names have been Anglicized with a Gallic flavor, even when Walton is not talking about an ancient character as he appears in France's works: p. 72, Candaule for Candaules; p. 187, Egina for Aegina; p. 196, Thespies for Thespiae; p. 204, Edouard for Eduard; p. 251, Khios for Chios; p. 261, Théra for Thera. There are some other peculiarities of spelling: Atfried Müller is always Ottfried; Wissowa is always Wissova; Walton seems not to have made up his mind whether to write Dionysus or Dionysos; and Cyclops is used as a plural instead of Cyclopes. In at least most of the instances in Chapter I in which Walton uses the word "Hellenistic" I think he means "Hellenic." The following are probably misprints: p. viii, Naxi for Nazi; p. 71, Nazamonians for Nasamonians; p. 123, Lucius's for Lucian's; p. 127, neuere for neue; p. 128, Beside for Besides; p. 165; Lenean for Lernean (or Lernaean); p. 172, Tyndarus for Tyndareus; p. 187, Tyrens for Tiryns; p. 188, Bassa for Bassae; p. 195, Callypigis for Callipygian; p. 208, note 8, delete "Greek"; p. 309, Synezius for Synesius. The occasional bits of Greek are printed with an accuracy most unusual in these days; there is, however, a bit of accentual confusion on p. 84.

The statement on p. 50 that in the thirty years following 1865 "literary history tended to accept the view that Homer was the author of a nucleus of episodes which served to form the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*" is not quite obscure

enough to conceal completely that it is an oversimplification to the point of falsity. M. Bergeret's observation that Helen herself prepared the food has pretty dubious Homeric support (apparently *Odyssey* 15, 93—but she is almost immediately with Menelaus in the storeroom [100] and probably merely gave some orders about the food to her servants) and is hardly enough to justify Walton's phrase, "the picture of a queen preparing food" (p. 52; cf. p. 140). Homer might well have found nothing offensive about a queen cooking, but he does not in fact give us any "picture" of Helen doing so. I have no doubt that France took material freely from the *Odyssey* for his "Le Chanteur de Kymé," but some of the anachronistic details cited by Walton are not quite accurate. The frequent invocations of the Muses in the *Iliad* really provide sufficient "documentation" for the statement by Homer in the story that his father learned song from the Muses (p. 251). The smooth stone seats for the elders do appear, as Walton says, in the *Odyssey*, but they also appear in the *Iliad* (18, 503-4). Melantho is scarcely a favorite servant of Penelope in the *Odyssey*, though it is true that as a child she had been well treated by Penelope. France obviously could not resist the temptation to give Homer as a wife this wanton mistress of the suitor Eurymachus. She is uniquely discourteous and quite the most disagreeable human female in the *Odyssey*. (One wonders if France knew that there are ancient traditions about how Homer had introduced into his poems personal friends and relatives. The ugly Thersites of the *Iliad*, for instance, is said to have been Homer's rascally guardian.) There is actually very little resemblance between "the life history ascribed to Melantho" by France and the career of the Phoenician woman in the *Odyssey*. Cyme, incidentally, is not an island (p. 4).

Walton is not, I suspect, right in explaining France's reference to "old Oedipus on Cithaeron" as a confused recollection of Tiresias' prophecy; it is probably a confused recollection of Oedipus' exposure on Cithaeron as a baby (p. 81). There are seven, not eight, extant plays of Sophocles (p. 88). There is something wrong with the line reference to the *Birds* on p. 91, and the innocent might think that "dweller between heaven and earth" was meant as a translation. Pericles' oration was delivered at the ceremony for those who fell in the first, not the second, year of the war (p. 92). Walton is surprised that among the Alexandrians France gave little attention to Polybius (p. 106); far more surprising to me is his apparent lack of interest in Apollonius' portrait of Medea falling in love with Jason. The learning at the top of p. 109 is confused, and I do not know why "Mars" is called a "weak" translation. Since France felt that Plutarch as a stylist had only *somewhat* less grace than Herodotus, this should prove that the statement, "France usually read his Plutarch in the Amyot translation," might have done without the "usually" (pp. 117-118). Achilles Tatius is dated too late (p. 126). Christodorus' work does not form "the opening section" of the *Anthology* (*ibid.*; so, also, on p. 282). Eos was not involved in the misadventure which cost Procris her life (p. 168). Walton wrongly asperses the character of Leda by speaking of "her other lover, Paris" (p. 172). The context on p. 188 gives the erroneous impression that the Propylaea was a temple; and does Walton really mean a temple at the *foot* of the Acropolis (p. 190)? "Sons" of Agamemnon should be, e.g., "children" (p. 196).

One wonders why Walton seems so confident that the Socrates satirized by Aristophanes is "the historical Socrates" and to be "differentiated from the literary creation" of Plato's dialogues (p. 211). Suidas might have been Suda or Souda (*ibid.*).

"Since the survival of Aristotle's philosophy in the form of notes taken by

his students—except for a few fragments of dialogues—offers no literary attraction . . ." (p. 214). This is unjustifiably hard on even Aristotle's style, and applies as a known fact to all of Aristotle's extant works a guess which some Aristotelians think may be applicable to a few of them.

In his account of "Gallion" (pp. 253-259) one would have expected Walton to mention that the Gallio of this story is a real, historical character, brother of the philosopher and dramatist Seneca (whose other brother, the father of Lucan, also appears in the story as Annaeus Mela), and that the dispute involving St. Paul is spoken of in the Book of Acts. In dealing with this story and with a few other topics, Epicurus and Epicureanism, for instance, Walton is perhaps somewhat handicapped by his agreement with Woolsey (p. vii) to divide ancient civilization and omit consideration of France and the Latin world.

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GOETHE'S FAUST AS A RENAISSANCE MAN: PARALLELS AND PROTOTYPES. By Harold Jantz. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951. 198 p.

After all that has been written about *Faust* during the last hundred years one would hardly expect a new book to raise important questions about the drama or to contribute significantly to our understanding of it. *Goethe's Faust as a Renaissance Man* does both. It attempts to show that the poem is not "chiefly the intensely personal expression of its author" and "not merely the product of the eighteenth and the prelude to the nineteenth century," but rather "the culminating expression and summation" of the era from the middle of the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century.

The blending of erudition, scholarly caution, and judicious common sense manifest in this book should make the reader hesitate to reject such unorthodox views. Discoveries in forgotten texts and pictures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries first impelled the author to investigate the matter. He has carefully reexamined probable Renaissance influences indicated in *Faust* studies by others, has sought significant new material, and has composed a picture of the Renaissance background of the drama in Goethe's mind which is richer than anything constructed before and probably closer to reality.

Professor Jantz ascribes most of the important ideas and configurations of both parts of *Faust* to Goethe's readings in the early 1770s, when large stores of older treatises and allegorical graphic works on philosophical, religious, and mystical topics seem to have come to his attention. The young poet must have assimilated, as akin to his mind, thought patterns and motifs of the Renaissance preserved there, and been inspired by all that is common to the *Lebensgefühl* and views of its great characters—Cusanus and Pico della Mirandola, above all, but also Leonardo, Michelangelo, Benvenuto Cellini, Dürer, Agrippa von Nettesheim (not just for the poodle), Cardanus, and Kepler; lesser-known figures such as John Dee (1527-1608) and George Stirk (Starkey) (1628-1665); and, finally, those creations of the Renaissance mind, Prospero and Faustus (the names are synonymous). The importance of Paracelsus and the Neoplatonists shrinks accordingly.

At first it seems doubtful whether new light can actually be cast on Goethe's concept of Faust by illuminating certain themes and aspects of the works and lives of these men. But as one proceeds from chapter to chapter and is offered more and more cumulative evidence, one comes to be impressed by the evidence and by the author's acquaintance with a host of practically unknown books of the period which are relevant to his subject.

His investigation proceeds mostly from the specific to the general. In the first

Study Scene, for example, the usual reference to the "meager" diagram in the *Aurea Catena Homeri* or the Jacob's ladder in Bible illustrations can neither explain Faust's raptured vision called forth by the sign of the macrocosm—if there must be explanation by reference—nor the detail, "Wie Himmelskräfte auf und nieder steigen Und sich die goldnen Eimer reichen." But Professor Jantz points to magnificent engraved folio representations of the macrocosm in Robert Fludd's *Medicina Catholica* (1629) and gives good reasons why he feels that this is the general area where the pictorial prototype might be sought. In tracing from the Middle Stoa and the late Pythagoreans through Kepler to Milton the motif of heavenly beings united by circular motions, he has found an analogue to Goethe's image closer than all others known; in *Paradise Lost*, VII, 365, the sun is depicted as a fountain from which, in a sort of reciprocal process, stars "in their golden urns draw light."

Fludd, in turn, may have developed his cosmology in response to the mysterious *Liber M* of the Rosicrucians, probably the closest approximation to the "geheimnisvolles Buch, Von Nostradamus' eigner Hand." The theory has been that, in this context, Nostradamus could not be much more than a sonorous name, since his reputation as an astrologist did not fit him for the role. But Goethe "probably knew what he was doing; ... when he wrote Nostradamus, he ... meant Nostradamus." Professor Jantz stresses the fact that the introduction of Nostradamus' prophecies depicts him in mystical union with the All—classically Delphic, not astrological. Besides, according to Renaissance beliefs prophets have a knowledge of the innermost workings of nature and can transcend the bounds of time and space. A concept of the seer's union with the "world soul" implies, then, in Jantz's view, a great deal for Nostradamus' role in our tragedy, with its abolition of time and space. His "mysterious book" could be the Book of Nature; the key Faust is grasping during his descent to the timeless Mothers might be identified with a magic rod which Nostradamus holds in his hand in the scene depicting his trance; and thus he himself appears as a symbolic figure dominant in the structure of the entire tragedy. Significant circumstances of Nostradamus' life and the possibility of an undiscovered pun fraught with meaning (Nostradamus-Notre Dame) serve as collateral support of the author's interpretation. This method of ingenious cross-references between established facts, new findings, and assumptions which reach from strong probabilities to mere possibilities is characteristic of the study as a whole. However, Jantz never attaches too much importance to any single prototype, parallel, or interpretation, but believes in the possibility of arriving at correct general conclusions, even if some part of the construction should be faulty. Having reached, for example, the end of the long chain of deductions just summarized, he designates as the only vitally important point "the Renaissance image of nature, which will not only help make Faust's first monologue clearer and completely sequential but will also show forth its ... true place in the whole."

The *Erdgeist* Scene has also proved a rich field for discoveries fitting marvelously into a *Faust* interpretation in the spirit of the Renaissance. We learn that the transformation of Faust's feeling of utter defeat by the Earth Spirit's apparition into a remembrance of a high point in life falls into a traditional pattern. Goethe's suggestion that the Earth Spirit should appear on the stage as Apollo or Zeus of Otricoli, when linked up with the semantic history of "world soul" and "world spirit," is a convincing clue to Goethe's early concept of him. Not satisfied with this, the author hunts for, and ferrets out, in Kepler's letters, a spirit "for the globe of the earth," separate from the one for the world. The fact that Kepler's writings provide a setting congruent with the Prologue in Heaven enhances the impressiveness of the verbal coincidence.

In presenting a great number of other Renaissance analogues, the author does not dissolve *Faust* into a collection of references from intellectual, literary, and iconographic history. He is, on the contrary, concerned to preserve structural unity from biographical fragmentation. Unity he sees not only in the intention of "the young poet to present as objectively as possible a man whose attitudes, problems, and actions are conditioned by the Renaissance," but particularly in the effect Cusanus' and Pico's philosophy seems to have had on the plan of the tragedy. Cassirer's *Faust*-patterned presentation of the system may have influenced this view, but Jantz weighs this danger with scholarly honesty and dismisses it. Faust remains for him an embodiment of the threefold Cusanian concept of the coincidence of opposites, of learned ignorance, and of the symbolic knowledge of God through knowledge of the world.

Professor Jantz's study has convincingly demonstrated Goethe's kinship with the characteristic thought of the Renaissance and made it likely that a much greater number of works of the period contributed significantly to the conception and shaping of *Faust* than has been assumed. No future commentator will find it possible to disregard the implications of this book.

We find it difficult, however, to accept two theses of the book. One asserts that "whatever in the drama expresses Goethe's personal principles and ideals does so because these happened to be in accord with the spirit of the Renaissance." We feel that this is an overstatement, refutable by external and inner evidence. The author's justifiable fascination with his discoveries may well have made him overshoot his target.

The other thesis, with its corollaries, needs some distinguishing of terms if it is to be discussed profitably. "The drama is not subjective and not of the eighteenth century," Professor Jantz states, "it is largely objective, of the Renaissance . . . with the personal coloring and blending which accompanied the act of poetic creation" (p. 124). The soundness of this statement seems to depend on the meaning of the phrases "*of* the eighteenth century" and "*of* the Renaissance." A danger of confusion between description of subject matter (which here, of course, comprises not only external action but also ideas, since *Faust* is a drama of ideas) and facts of intellectual history lurks in this wording. There can be no doubt that in terms of subject matter *most* of "the larger complexes within the drama . . . are distinctly Renaissance in character rather than eighteenth century" (though hardly the Gretchen tragedy); but has the opposite ever been maintained? Who would deny that "the career of an eighteenth-century scholar simply did not take such a course" as Wagner's, "from the humanist rhetorician and antiquarian . . . to the alchemical experimenter"? After all, aside from its timeless symbolism, *Faust* is a drama about a man of the sixteenth century. Students of German literature are indebted to Jantz for proving that the over-all pattern of the inner action is decidedly more Renaissance than has usually been seen. But even if "the values and principles . . . in their larger interrelations and sequences resemble those of the Renaissance more than they do those of Goethe's age," does this prove, in terms of intellectual history, that *Faust* is primarily "not of the eighteenth century"?

We believe rather that a characterization of "Goethe's age" would be faulty which did not take into account the revival of attitudes resembling those of the Renaissance in the outstanding work of the age and in the complex epoch during which it was written. We wonder whether it is really "a fairly crucial test" to ask: "What eighteenth-century work aside from Goethe's *Faust* is comparable to Pico's, for instance, for giving an all-over *structural* outline of the character, place, and destiny of the 'Faustian' man?" Must "Faustian," Renaissance ideas

which are important in Goethe's thinking or in some phase of the literature of his age really be treated as irrelevant in the picture of the age, simply because they were not shaped into a contemporary work of analogous structure? We mention only the postulate of totality and what has been called by Lovejoy the "expansionist trend" of the eighteenth century; the same century's themes of perfectibility, of man's middle position in the Great Chain of Being, of the unity of all nature, including man, of natural and undogmatic religion; the Book of Nature, the Soul of the World, symbolic knowledge. A configuration of the last five of the concepts, plus the coincidence of opposites and veneration of Cusanus, Giordano Bruno, and Kepler reappear, incidentally, in Schelling and Hardenberg. Is their work "of the Renaissance"? Do they and Leibnitz, Hamann, Herder, Bonnet, St. Martin, Hemsterhuis, and all that is conveniently called *Sturm und Drang* really have no significance for our problem except that they offer "scattered parallels in words and thought, however compendious?"

We have perhaps devoted too large a proportion of this review to a discussion of the conflict between the author's revolutionary emphasis on the objective Renaissance character of the drama and the traditional consideration of its subjective and "age of Goethe" features. Yet this shift in emphasis could affect the interpretation of the action, of the characters, and of detail, and tend to reduce their symbolic meaning. For hardly any competent scholar has ever maintained that they reflect the eighteenth century as much as Jantz maintains that they reflect the Renaissance.

Mephisto, besides remaining an elemental spirit, now appears as the elegant, accomplished villain of the Renaissance, modeled after historical and fictional characters such as Pietro Aretino, Machiavelli, Luigi Pulci, Astarotte, and Iago. It is fascinating indeed to be shown close resemblances between facets of Mephisto and of figures of this large literary ascendancy. But the generally recognized antitheses, which might be circumscribed as the emotional-spiritual concept of life versus the ultimately intellectual concept, embodied by Faust versus Wagner, and the ultimately spiritual-sensual drive versus the radically intellectual-materialistic view, embodied by Faust versus Mephisto, seem largely to vanish—swallowed up in the Renaissance antithesis of the antiquarian or the humanist orator who overestimates form versus the "integralist," and in the imposing portrait of the clever and hellishly wicked politician, Mephisto, without any clear relationship to Faust.

In short, from Professor Jantz's compact and extraordinarily well-documented study we have gained the conviction that Goethe used many more prototypes and ideas from the Renaissance than had been previously known, to represent timeless conflicts and drives experienced by him and his generation in contact with the rationalism, the emotionalism, and the romanticism of his own time. Of the flood of light thus thrown upon possible models we have mentioned only a few rays. The structure of the drama and many details are now clearer, the contour sharper; the play now "looks" different, even more interesting in some ways.

The author knows that in the end *Faust* is neither a drama of the Renaissance nor of the eighteenth century, but symbolic poetry. It is a fortunate result of this view and of some of his findings that he condemns the abuse of *Faust* as a document for biographers, as an embodiment of modern philosophical systems, as an epitome of the German mind, or as an inspirational tract—and thus helps to reestablish the poem in its true glory.

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ENGLISH MISCELLANY. A SYMPOSIUM OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, AND THE ARTS. Edited by Mario Praz. Vol. III. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura (for the British Council), 1952. 284 p.

Perhaps only one of the essays in this volume of *English Miscellany* could be described as "straight" comparative literature, namely the long study by Siegfried Korninger of "Lord Byron und Nikolaus Lenau" which submits the English and the German poet to parallel analysis. This is followed by a useful survey of "Recent Byron Scholarship" by Leslie A. Marchand; these two articles make the volume one which no student of Byron—still the romantic exemplar of international-mindedness—can afford to miss.

Yet this rich and subtly edited "symposium of history, literature, and the arts" suggests by the choice and sequence of its subjects that interweaving of many sides of human activity—artistic affinities and political sympathies inextricably bound up with literary influences—which go to make up the sum of cultural exchange. Two of the articles, for example, show how a visual approach to literature can illuminate problems of comparative literature.

So far as I know, H. W. Donner is breaking new ground in his convincing argument that Thomas More in his treatise on the *Four Last Things* is influenced, not only in general by the gruesome iconography of the Dance of Death, but perhaps by the actual representation of it in the Pardon Churchyard of St. Paul's which he (More) mentions. This leads Donner to raise the very interesting question of what he calls "naturalistic" or "Gothic" influence on More and other English humanists, an influence which would differentiate them from their Italian prototypes (and even, so Donner suggests, from Erasmus), and would represent a moment in literature comparable to the moment in the art of the Transalpine Renaissance (e.g. in Dürer) in which Gothic themes of the late Middle Ages are realized by means of the new Renaissance technique. Such an observation as this —reached through bringing disciplines very familiar to historians of German Renaissance art to bear upon an English literary Renaissance problem—suggests a perhaps too much neglected "comparative" orientation for that problem. Might it be instructive to inquire whether the humanism of More and his circle is at times informed by a "Gothic" spirit and a use of "Gothic" imagery which would relate it more closely to the Northern Renaissance than to that of the South? The same question should, I think, also be raised in regard to the second English Renaissance—that of the Elizabethan Age—in which even such a devotee of Italianate classical beauty as Spenser uses in the *Faery Queen* "ugly" Gothic imagery, perhaps partly derived from German Protestant transformations of Apocalypse themes (for instance, in Cranach's illustrations of Luther's Bible), alongside his ideal descriptions.

In the article by Jorgen Andersen on "Giant Dreams" it is a "Gothic" influence from Italian art, in the form of the wild and gruesome architectural dreams of Piranesi's imagination, that is found to have influenced the torture-haunted dungeons of the English Gothic novel—perhaps Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and certainly Beckford's *Vathek*. This sensitively written study is illustrated with several Piranesi nightmares which are most convincingly compared with quotations from the ravings of *Vathek*.

Three articles deal with importation of the visual arts and their practitioners by England from Italy. Jacob Hess studies with full illustrations the work of Orazio Gentileschi for the Queen's House at Greenwich, analyzing the iconography of the paintings and indicating the relations of the artist with Inigo Jones and his group. This is an important article for those interested in Italianate influence on Caroline literature and theater, an influence intimately bound up with

King Charles's taste in Italian art. Ilaria Toesca prints, and ably discusses, new documents which throw light on the architect Alessandro Galilei, and on his work in England and Ireland in the early eighteenth century. Claudia Refice discusses Canova and the English, and works by Canova in England.

An historical theme which winds through the symposium is lightly linked to the English Whig or liberal tradition. The relations of Sir Henry Neville with Cosimo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, are illuminated by Anna Maria Crino in an article which publishes new documents, including a revealing letter from Neville on the political state of England in 1680. Neville belonged to James Harrington's group, and the writer of the article suggests that the presence of a first edition of Harrington's *Oceana* in the National Library of Florence may be due to Neville's influence with Cosimo III. With Neville and Harrington we make contact with one of the formative influences on the English Whig tradition—namely its constant admiration for the republican government of Venice, an admiration probably linked (though this does not come within the province of the article under discussion) with the veneration in which Paolo Sarpi was held in England, where he was long regarded as to all intents and purposes a liberal and rational Anglican.

Following the study of Byron and a German poet, already referred to, comes the brilliant and witty portrait of Sydney Smith by W. H. Auden. Though, like Byron, both a Whig and a sufferer from melancholia, Smith's recipes for combating melancholy sound singularly un-Byronic; they include taking short views into the future, "not further than dinner or tea," keeping good blazing fires, and being "firm and constant in the exercise of rational religion." The essay concludes with an admirable summary of the differences between English and continental liberalism, suggested by the uncontinental phenomenon of the combination of Whiggery with a mild parsonic career, as embodied in Sydney Smith.

Finally, we have the middle-aged, liberal-minded Englishwoman, horrified by the fever-haunted prisons crammed with political suspects, by the absence of newspapers, books, education, good knitting wool, shops in which to buy flower seeds, and by the ubiquitous presence of poverty, ignorance, and misery in the most beautiful country in the world, inhabited by the most intelligent and the kindest people in the world, ground down by political and priestly oppression. These were some of the impressions of Mrs. A. W. Power on her travels through pre-Risorgimento Italy in 1829. Her "Notes on Italy," here published for the first time by V. Gabrieli from a manuscript in a private collection, is an absolutely fascinating document.

The only articles so far not mentioned are the last, a note on Ronald Firbank's tomb at Verano, and the first, in which G. Devoto compares the "break" between Latin and modern Italian and modern French with the "break" between English before the Norman Conquest and modern English.

It is not within my competence to discuss the linguistic learning in this article; but when the writer, in deprecating what has certainly often been an overemphasis on Anglo-Saxonism in relation to English culture, speaks of "quel vago gusto per l' anglosassonismo di cui il Milton fu forse il primo campione," he is not quite accurate. Matthew Parker, John Foxe, John Selden, among others, had already exhibited Anglo-Saxon sympathies which—related in this earlier period to efforts to find precedents for the English Reformation—became, in the seventeenth century, political in the insistence that English common law and parliamentary institutions date from before the Norman Conquest. The enormous development of Anglo-Saxon scholarship in seventeenth-century England by mediaevalist antiquarians (see D. C. Douglas, *English Scholars*, 1939) is related to the King versus Parliament struggle. In fact "Saxonism" and "Venetianism"

are sometimes curiously mingled as historical antecedents for antityranical republicanism (cf. the historical attitude of Algernon Sydney quoted by Z. S. Fink in *The Classical Republicans*, 1945, p. 161), and the classical republic, represented by Venice, becomes identified with Saxon liberty. That there is this northern mediaeval as well as the classical element in the English liberal tradition is important. The Whig nobleman, enclosed in the classical form of his Venetian-Palladian mansion, exhibits a Gothic eccentricity and naturalism distantly comparable to that which a writer in this volume detects in the humanism of More. Perhaps it was some fusion of this kind which enabled Byron to become a romantic symbol of liberty for both the North and the South.

The length of this review testifies to the stimulating quality of Volume III of *English Miscellany*, on which Professor Praz and his publisher are to be warmly congratulated.

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ADAM MICKIEWICZ, POET OF POLAND: A SYMPOSIUM. Edited by Manfred Kridl. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951. xiv, 292 p.

The editor of this symposium, Professor Manfred Kridl, has taught Polish and other Slavonic literatures both here and abroad, and since 1948 has been the Adam Mickiewicz Professor of Polish Studies at Columbia University. This collection of essays was designed as part of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Adam Mickiewicz's birth in 1798, which was celebrated in 1948-49. It presents the contribution of the great Polish poet and leader to world culture and the appreciation of this contribution by foreign writers. It collects opinions of distinguished contemporaries of Mickiewicz and of present-day scholars in Slavonic literature. It should encourage further comparative studies of Mickiewicz. Complete coherence has not been achieved in the book—but this is a common shortcoming of symposiums.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part contains general studies of Mickiewicz as poet and leader; the second concerns the relationship of Mickiewicz with those countries in which he spent some time, or in which he was interested: Russia, Germany, Bohemia, France, Switzerland, Italy, and the United States.

In one of the most interesting articles in the symposium, "Mickiewicz and the Jewish Problem," Abraham G. Duker points out that the poet's intimate disciple and friend, and the guardian of his family after his death, was a Jew, Armand Levy. Mickiewicz told him: "I would not want the Jews to leave Poland because, just as the Union of Poland with Lithuania, differing in origin and religion, brought our Poland to its greatness and happiness, so I am certain that the union of Poland and Israel will assure our spiritual and moral strength."

Almost all the outstanding Russian poets of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries made translations from Mickiewicz, especially from the *Crimean Sonnets* and *Konrad Wallenrod*. He greatly influenced Pushkin and Lermontov. In his article on "The Russians on Mickiewicz," John N. Washburn says: "Russians have been translating Mickwiewicz for more than 125 years, and during that lengthy period, virtually every Russian poet has directly or indirectly come into contact with his literary creation." Karel Krejčí, writing on "Mickiewicz and Bohemia," states that "few foreign poets have met with such response in Czech literature as Adam Mickiewicz." Mickiewicz liked the Czechs and linked them closely with his own people, spoke with sympathy of the Czech Revival, and admired the vital strength of the Czech nation, which he called "the most moral and artistic of all Slavonic nations." He defined Czech as the Slavonic language of

science, but considered the predominance of rationalism in the Czech character as a one-sidedness which he would have liked to see supplemented with Polish emotionalism.

Manfred Kridl contributes a study on "Mickiewicz on America and the American Potato," and Ludwik Krzyzanowski discusses "Cooper and Mickiewicz: A Literary Friendship." When an uprising against Russia occurred in Warsaw in 1830, Cooper became the chairman of an American committee to aid the cause and wrote an eloquent appeal to the American people. Mickiewicz had a very high opinion of Emerson, in whom he found a kindred spirit who gave less importance to intellectual speculation than to intuition and moral strength.

This book is a valuable addition to the commentaries and discussions in English on Slavonic literatures and their leading authors. We should be very appreciative of Professor Kridl's undertaking. A second edition of the symposium might include a study of the influence of Mickiewicz on the literatures of the southern Slavs, especially of the Slovenes and Croations.

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